

## **SIUE Alumni Association Board of Directors**

### **Minutes of the December 2, 2010 Meeting**

#### **Birger Hall Special Events Room-SIUE Campus**

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm. In attendance were Board President Bev George, Immediate Past President Ajay Kansal, President Elect Tom McRae, Vice President of Finance Dr. Barry Delassus, Vice President Melissa Glauber, Board members Veronica Armouti, Paul Baeske, Brett Briggs, Sandy Chinn, Bill Graebe, Jr., Christine Jackson, Dr. Karen Kelly, SJ Morrison, Kevin Nesselhauf, Jeremy Plank, Brandon Rah, Stephanie Renken, Travis Willeford, Brooke Woods, Advisory Council Members El Douglas and Larry Lexow, STAT members Travis Bourne, Lindy Noel, and Abby Tonkin, Assistant Alumni Affairs Director Katie Bennett, and Association Executive Director Steve Jankowski. Absent were: Board members Kelley Brooks, Kevin Doyle, Dr. Rhonda Green, Patricia Hufford, Chuck Rathert, Kevin Rust, John Simmons, and Advisory Council Members Rita Adkins, Deb O'Neill, and Marcia Wickenhauser. Advisory Council Member Janet Sprehe was to join the meeting via teleconference, but the equipment was unavailable.
- II. Board President Bev George then addressed the meeting participants, welcoming attendees to the meeting, expressing her excitement about the meeting and anticipation regarding the brainstorming session planned for the dinner portion of the meeting. She also stressed she was happy to have the meeting at the beginning of the Christmas season, as "everyone was in such a good mood." She stressed that as we talk about our blessing, "I want everyone to know how blessed I feel to be involved with this particular board." She also thanked all of them members for the work they do, adding she could not think of a better group of individuals with whom to be involved than this board. Bev also set the stage for the upcoming brainstorming session by describing the list of activities hosted by the board this year as "amazing and exhausting." She said she hoped the discussion this evening would include the feasibility of pursuing this great effort without endangering the quality of our events. Bev added that anyone who knows her knows that she wants to do it all and "excess is always better." But she added she wanted to put our collective minds together and be prudent with what our staff can be expected to do and what we as board members can be expected to do without running the risk of "burning out." She also told the members that Tom McRae would lead the discussion regarding the financial expectations placed on the board members in support of the university and the capital campaign. Bev added it had been a pleasant experience to see so much involvement from the board in the last year, stressing it was amazing that board members not only committed to serving at events and activities, but enjoyed it. She also called being on the Association board "has been my finest hour" in my service to the community. She also said the committees were quite active and alumni were responding despite the economic times. She also thanked the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor Hundley for the increased level of support for alumni efforts. She also discussed the "community buzz" that she is made aware of during her work in the community. She offered kudos to everyone on the board, acknowledging the professionalism and integrity that she believes sets this board apart. Bev then stressed that we have some

serious work ahead of us, some tough decisions to make, and some economic consequences to discuss as well. Bev then added “we need to thank Steve and Katie without whom this Association would not thrive to the level it is doing.” The statement was greeted with a round of applause from board members. She then thanked Brandon Rahn, acknowledging this was his last meeting as a STAT board liaison. She then wished everyone a very Merry Christmas!

III. The members then reviewed minutes from the September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 Board meeting.

There was no discussion. SJ Morrison moved the minutes be approved. Christine Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

IV. Vice Chancellor Patrick Hundley was then introduced to provide an update on the Capital Campaign. Patrick began by wishing everyone a Happy Advent. Patrick said he will be making a presentation to the SIU Board of Trustees on Wednesday. He said in preparing his remarks, the campaign total stands at just over 24-million dollars. He said some schools like dentistry and business are doing well on the campaign, while others are doing as well, but all are coming along and he is “very pleased about that.” He then reiterated what he has written in his report the Board of Trustees is his philosophy which guides his fundraising. He said the first point is that “Happy alumni make the best donors.” He stressed happy alumni begin in the classroom with teachers who make a difference in a student’s life. After that he said it becomes the responsibility of the alumni association and the alumni office to keep the alumni informed and connected. He added that he felt that everyone would agree that there was a period in the history of the university where alumni relations were not so great. He then added that he is also happy to report that the alumni activities and efforts have increased dramatically. He described the number of events in the last year as outstanding. He added he has always challenged Steve (Jankowski) and Katie (Bennett) and they have always met my challenge and even more and that he was very proud of all they are doing. He stressed alumni in the community are “hearing the good news.” He stressed one of the key things were need to do, especially with the older alumni, to get them back on campus. He said he also tries to reinforce the distinction that our (SIUE) alumni are different from those of SIU Carbondale. Patrick said a responsibility that “we all have” is to get more and more alumni back on campus to be able to spread the word about the capital campaign. Patrick then described a “white paper” he had written in 2008 which has now been picked up by other sources. He said he made several points in the report which have proven to be right on track. The points he covered was that donors are hesitant to give, donors don’t like the bailout program, and individuals are keeping much closer tabs on our money with donors making fewer and smaller gifts. He added that corporate giving is also down. In light of all of these issues, we must work harder by making more calls with many of our DOD’s responding to this. But we must get alumni back on campus. Patrick then described how the university is working with larger donors who were hesitant about completing their pledge. Hundley also added this was a great time to focus on planned gifts. Patrick then stressed that the time frame for the campaign may be longer than originally planned. He told members to help we must all be advocates of the campaign. He then referred to the “talking points” handout which had been provided to each member of the board. He said the handout answered several questions which could come up while discussing the campaign with

an individual. He broke down the amounts we hoped to raise on each of the projects listed with the campaign goal set at 50-million dollars. He then said as important as it is to give ourselves, it's important to give what we can afford. He also stressed each of us need to be advocates of the campaign. Patrick then said all board members will be invited to the public phase kickoff on March 19<sup>th</sup>. He said we want it to be a great occasion celebrating the status of the campaign. He then said he is very excited about this capital campaign, which is the first this university has ever had. He then shared a story of a visit with an alumna in Ohio which led to a dramatic increase in her giving levels. He stressed one more time that he wanted board members to be advocates for the campaign. SJ Morrison then asked what some of the six main projects referred to, as in student development going to scholarships. Patrick answered that yes, scholarships were one of the projects, as well as the development of research faculty.

- V. Jankowski next gave his Executive Director's report informing the board that for the period of July 1, 2010 through October 31, 2010, the Association had revenues of \$59,937.00 and expenditures of \$69,175.00. Jankowski also updated the board on the status of the Peer Questionnaire project thanking Kevin Rust, Pat Hufford, Chuck Rathert, and Stephanie Renken for completing the task with Wichita State University, the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, the University of North Florida, and the University of South Alabama respectively. On the membership initiative, Jankowski reported three board members had supplied him with a contact list and that he would provide those members with information that evening. Jankowski then updated members on the status of the Board of Directors Scholarship informing members the dollar total as of December 2, 2010 was \$1,066.68. That amount was provided by gifts from five board members, three advisory board members and two matching gifts. He concluded his report by informing the board that the two-year strategic plan developed during a board retreat in January 2009 was 95% complete with several tasks outlined in the plan as "on-going." Jankowski then referred members to the strategic plan update which was including in their board materials.

#### VI. Committee Reports

- A. Awards Committee-Stephanie Renken indicated the applications were now available for the board scholarships with letters going out to high schools in the region, informing them on how to apply. Stephanie added that come April, the committee will be extremely busy reviewing the applications. Jankowski then referred to the copy of a letter written by Karen Beyer, the parent of a 2009 scholarship recipient. The letter provides appreciation for the scholarship and its impact on a family, struggling with the economic times.
- B. Executive Committee-Bev George then opened her report with the need to take action on the School of Pharmacy alumni representative on the board. Jankowski identified 2009 graduate Dr. Travis Willeford who had been elected president of the School of Pharmacy Alumni Council Executive Board. Jankowski reported the Executive Committee had unanimously approved Willeford's nomination. Christine Jackson moved Willeford's nomination be accepted by the full board. SJ Morrison seconded. The motion passed. The next issue involved the transition of STAT officers and representatives on the board. It was announced the Executive Committee had approved the separation of Brooke Woods and Brandon Rahn from the board with the approval of the new STAT president Travis

Bournes and Vice-President Jamie Springer to serve as the new STAT representatives. Veronica Armouti moved the separation and nomination be approved. Christine Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed. Next Bev asked Tom McRae to lead the discussion on the expectations on the board for participation in the capital campaign. Tom said the Executive Committee had met last week regarding the campaign and the need for the board to lead by example. He asked for discussion on the possibility of the board setting a goal for the capital campaign. He stressed the giving can take different venues, using Ajay Kansal's giving from his nursery to the university which counts to the capital campaign. Jankowski then stressed that any gift to the Board of Director's scholarship is included in the total giving for the capital campaign, with the annual goal for the scholarship being three thousand dollars. Jankowski then stressed we could track any giving from members of the Association board. Tom stressed that each member could choose any place to donate. Veronica Armouti asked what the total number of board members was and Jankowski said there were 25 board members and six advisory council members. That makes 31 members with members being told they could give at levels like 50-dollars, 100-dollars, 200-dollars, or whatever they choose. Bev George added that all gifts are kept anonymous. She also called 100-dollars a nice solid donation with others giving through their respective schools. Veronica Armouti added she felt this was reasonable and that most boards have the expectations their members will donate. SJ asked if the gifts made to other areas on campus would count toward the three thousand dollar goal or was that different. Jankowski indicated the Executive Committee had discussed having the scholarship being one goal, then tracking alumni board member giving so we could say the board contributed "X" number of dollars to the capital campaign. El Douglas then asked how we would track board members giving to their schools. Patrick Hundley described the database tracks giving. Jankowski said an alert could be placed on the name of each board member to indicate when that member has given. El Douglas called that "good PR" for the Association. Sandy Chinn said it would be difficult to go out to the community and ask without having 100% from board. Patrick Hundley then said our efforts could help raise the percentage of alumni giving, meaning the number of SIUE Alumni giving to anything on campus. He then told the board the giving level was 3.8%, with the national average for public universities being 4.6%. It was decided that the board set a goal of three thousand dollars a year for the board scholarship and 100% participation in giving by the board of directors. It was also decided that we measure the giving on a fiscal year basis. It was also decided that we work to award the first scholarship for the Fall 2011 semester, even if the amount stands at \$500.00.

- C. Finance Committee-Dr. Barry DeLassus-Barry announced the Finance Committee had met and he was happy to announce the Association was still operating on a zero deficit (balanced budget). He also indicated the board had been provided with an updated and corrected budget statement for the current fiscal year. Barry also discussed the Fiscal Year 2010 audit with copies available. He told members the Finance Committee was happy with McGladrey and Pullen, the company hired to conduct the audit.

- D. Homecoming Committee-Katie Bennett-Katie told the board the dates for Homecoming 2011 had been set with Homecoming and Parent Weekend being split for the first time in years. Homecoming Weekend will be October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, with Family Weekend October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Katie said Homecoming had been managed by Student Affairs with support from our office, athletics and campus recreation. With the change, Katie stressed the Association has been asked to take the lead with Homecoming 2011. Katie described the first meeting of a university-wide homecoming committee with the goal to expand the committee and create “buy-in” from the entire university reminding people that homecoming is a campus-wide program, not just an alumni event. Katie outlined the current plans as keeping the program focused on a couple of events instead of spreading the program and volunteers too thin. Katie then outlined the plan, with the Hall of Fame Banquet set for Friday night, October 7<sup>th</sup> in the MUC conference center, while students hold the bonfire in the Woodland Bowl. Saturday, the focus will be on the men’s soccer game with Evansville at 7:00pm. Katie then outlined tentative plans by Arts and Issues to hold a major MRF-like concert on campus that evening, if we could get the time of the game moved. She told the board the artist now being considered was Bob Dylan. If not Bob Dylan, the concert would have an MRF appeal to draw older alumni, but still be well-known enough to bring students. The concert would be held in the Vadalabene Center. Katie stressed we want something “large scale.” She also told the board a comprehensive homecoming budget is being developed so we can have an accurate cost to put on Homecoming with the effort designed to get more University funding. A question was asked about the football game and Katie said no decision has been made on that.
- E. Membership and Marketing-SJ Morrison-Morrison told the board the committee had what he called “a delightful summit” on our marketing efforts, indicating he would like to talk more about it during the brainstorming session. He said the basic structure of the summit was to take a look at all of the communication pieces that come out of the alumni association from the emails to the website to the alumni magazine. He wanted to save the rest of the discussion for the brainstorming session.
- F. Programming-Christine Jackson-Christine first echoed what had been earlier said by Bev George by thanking board members for their attendance and participation in activities and events in the calendar year. She said she felt the Ambassadors program came off better than anyone had anticipated. She referred to the packet prepared by Katie describing the events of the year. Christine then reported on one of the more recent major events which was the trivia night on November 6<sup>th</sup>. We had 117 attendees. Christine also told the board that the gala, tentatively set for September 2011 may be moved to February or March of 2012 to provide the committee more time to develop the event as well as to not conflict with Homecoming and Trivia Night.
- G. STAT Report-Brandon Rahn, Brooke Woods, and Travis Bournes-Brandon reported there have been many changes going on with STAT over the past few months. Brooke Woods then provided the following update: She first thanked the Alumni Association for providing the support which enabled them to hold

their strategic plan retreat. She said they reviewed their mission and developed a simple statement which reads: "The mission of STAT is to create relationships with SIUE alumni and other students, while strengthening your lifelong loyalty to SIUE." She then provided their vision statement which reads: "STAT will be recognized both on campus and nationally for having a strong and engaged membership base that's committed to developing an atmosphere of student philanthropy and school spirit/pride." Brooke listed the goals and objectives of the organization as creating a signature event, creating an officer mentor program, and liaisons with other school spirit committees. She then listed the new STAT Committees which were created: Marketing, Programming, Mentor, School Spirit, Fundraising, and Philanthropy which would become active in 2011-12 school year. Brooke described the mentor committee as a body which would establish training for the new officers who would be mentored by current officers. Travis Bourne then described the new STAT officer positions and roles: (See the attached power-point presentation). The power point presentation outlined everything from the organizational chart, 2011 officers, committee goals and projects. (See attached power-point presentation). Katie then took the floor and shared with the board the level of dedication demonstrated by the STAT members who participated in the strategic planning retreat. She also personally acknowledged the work done by Brooke Woods who will be graduating in December and beginning her new career. Katie then acknowledged the work done by Brandon Rahn, indicating he would be graduating in May. Katie told the board STAT has become so active it has taken on a second board liaison. SJ Morrison and Kevin Nesselhauf will now work together with STAT.

H. The business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm with dinner served and the brainstorming session begun.

## **Brainstorming Notes**

**Programming**-What were some of the favorite events and least favorite events of the year that they attended.

Positive: Trivia Night-Keep same date, move location to Edwardsville

Wine-Tasting in Grafton

Negatives: Happy Hours-Difficulty in engaging, noise, strictly social.

Ideas/Issues: Tracking alumni participation and memberships generated by the event to determine the success of the event.

What is the cost per alumni? Is that an effective tool for measuring the success of an event?

Partnering with membership & marketing to promote events

Tracking alumni membership per event or surveying

Use database to track what solicitation is most effective at generating a membership response

Create an incentive to have an alumnus sign-up at an event (t-shirt, etc.)

Do our events have value for our alumni?

Are we trying to do too many events, should we do fewer events?

Let's look at what works and what doesn't

We need to have time to do the follow-up/stewardship after events

How are our events perceived by our alumni?

Quality of events is more important than the number of events

Are we saturating our alumni with noise instead of quality events which draw their interest?

Preparation time is critical and with so many events on our calendar that it's difficult to do sufficient planning and preparation.

Do networking breakfasts every other month instead of once a month.

Make the university more-friendly through events which demonstrate acceptance of alumni.

Patrick's goal: At least 25 off-campus alumni events besides on-campus events

Generate greater attendance by encouraging people to come or by bringing other alumni with them.

Use alumni volunteers in particular geographic areas to recruit attendees in their respective geographic areas.

Let's look at what made this not work while we try to develop metrics on how to measure success.

Use ambassadors for oversight on volunteers and local programs

Provide calling lists in a local area to ambassadors to reach out to alumni.

Secure work-study students to increase level of assistance.

How much responsibility can you give to a student worker in dealing with alumni relations?

Use name tags to identify who is an alumni association member and who isn't by listing the membership on the name tags.

Examine the events which have low attendance and could generate negative feelings.

Provide ambassador training.

We're planting seeds and have to keep providing opportunities.

Bring benefits materials to our events so we can inform attendees of what they get with membership.

Create a "talking points" handout which can be distributed by the ambassadors.

Use board orientation to conduct ambassador training.

Use a business card drawing or some type of display of attendee business cards.

Use a thought leader to create value for the alumni

## **Marketing:**

Ideas/Issues: Copy the "I am a Mormon" concept for "I am a Cougar" campaign.

"Put a face" on our communication pieces. Be personal.

eConnection is strong, effective piece but needs call to action for membership.

eEdition is good and may only be skimmed, not read and does not have a call to action for membership.

Use direct marketing to parents of students.

Use eConnection content to drive readers to websites as well as membership.

Put personal face on membership renewal notices.

Send personal notes to alumni to recognize accomplishments.

Do more to target parents of students who are about to graduate.

Use generational approach by identifying that iconic image or historical moment which would instantly connect with alumni.

Offer decade reunion approach.

Create survey link with eDition

#### Membership Services

Discount for private events at the Morris University Center

Request feedback on what benefits are useful and which are not

#### Strategic Plan

March retreat at Pere Marquette to develop short term and long term plan for the future of the organization.

Board Survey: Jankowski then asked attendees to complete the board survey contained in their packet and either leave it after the meeting, or complete it and return it.

The session ended at 8:15pm.