

**SIUE Alumni Association**  
**Strategic Plan for 2011-2016**  
**Developed June 12, 2011**

Mission

Be a valued partner of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) through the advancement and promotion of SIUE alumni, the University, and its friends.

Vision

The SIUE Alumni Association will foster a lifelong, mutually beneficial relationship among SIUE alumni, the University, and its friends.

Aspirations

To become known by every Cougar as the gateway to SIUE and the alumni community, and to meaningfully engage more alumni in memberships, programs, and services every year.

Based on its mission, vision, and aspirations, the actions of the SIUE Alumni Association will be guided by four strategic initiatives which will drive annual operating plans, be shaped by market feedback from its constituents, and be tracked and measured for success around selected key indicators. The SIUE Alumni Association will also adhere to the core values of respect, generosity, service, and quality of life.

Strategic Initiative One

**Promote advocacy by cultivating an environment that develops and reinforces a sense of pride among alumni in the University and with each other.**

- Develop and maintain ownership of the lifelong university experience of our alumni.
- Integrate alumni into the University activities by soliciting their support through polling or surveys.
- Where appropriate and feasible, allow alumni to make decisions related to specific topics impacting the operation of the Association.
- Educate alumni and friends of the University regarding the enhanced value of the SIUE degree.
- Recognize 13-15 influential/successful alumni at the annual Hall of Fame Awards Banquet.
- Include a highly-successful alumnus(a) in an SIUE sponsored marketing campaign at least once a year.
- Ensure the activities and work product of the Alumni Association reflect and further the excellence of the University.

- Have five (5) alumni host seminars or events annually, initially in the Metropolitan St. Louis area with expansion to other geographic locations. These events will be coordinated by an event ambassador with guidance from Office of Alumni Affairs staff.
- Create an educational program to train volunteers to maintain the consistency of Association programming, and hold at least one training seminar annually. The training could be done initially by members of the Office of Alumni Affairs staff, with future training to be performed by a “seasoned” volunteer or board member.

### Strategic Initiative Two

**Establish and nurture the relationship of alumni with each other, the Association, and the University by focusing on well-planned, well-marketed, cost effective events.**

- To better engage alumni with the University, develop more on-campus programs.
- Limit out of town visits to major cities, with high concentrations of alumni, on a once a year basis. This effort could include the offering of group or family vacation packages.
- Develop an annual calendar of events which will be distributed to alumni in January of each calendar year to more effectively promote the upcoming events. This calendar will include the dates of the four board meetings each year.
- Create and promote one major, annual signature event.
- Communicate (via email/mail) alumni events and updates to media outlets.
- Purchase an electronic “message board” to be placed in the Birger Hall lobby to more effectively promote alumni and university events.
- Secure an IPAD with credit card swipe capabilities to enable alumni to become members of the alumni association at events.
- Investigate the possible creation of a “membership app.”
- Develop programs that target graduates of the most recent decade.

### Strategic Initiative Three

**By serving as a gateway, the SIUE Alumni Association will cultivate mutually beneficial relationships between alumni and the University, the University and its alumni, alumni to each other, and alumni to students.**

#### **Alumni to University**

- Educate current and potential association members of available resources. Efforts will include:
  - A review of the user-friendliness of the association website

- Create resource tables or displays in Birger Hall, the Student Fitness Center and the Morris University Center.
- Create a resource section or listing in the eConnection.
- Include a list of benefits and links in the eDition e-mail newsletters.
- Create a cultivation plan for alumni involvement.
  - Create a “moves management plan” (*a carefully constructed, step-by-step procedure for follow-up and cultivation*) for event attendees—thank you letters, follow-up phone calls, personal meetings, committee involvement, board involvement, etc.
  - Expand non-board member involvement on committees to create a leadership pool for future board members.
  - Expand the role of alumni event ambassadors to include participation in the follow-up portion with attendees (create script, FAQ’s, talking points for phone conversations).
  - Poll alumni on a regular basis for feedback and suggestions.
  - Communicate with lifetime members on a regular basis.
  - Create a regular communication plan for annual members.
- Set staff expectations for proactive alumni outreach.
  - Identify reasonable number of visits per month that alumni staff will meet with current and prospective members.
- Equip and educate board members.
  - Provide pocket card marketing piece with key points for the Alumni Association to empower board members with member recruitment information and conversation starters.

### **University to Alumni**

- Solicit, cultivate, and track alumni participation in University initiatives.
  - Athletics, Arts & Issues, theater performances, Admissions, Career development Center, Fitness Center, Lovejoy Library.
  - Work with representatives from each area, the campus community at large, and the administration to create a “cultivation plan” for alumni to increase participation.
- Solicit, track, and cultivate alumni participation in Schools, College, units, and affinity groups.

- Create a target list of organizations/groups/stakeholders to begin creating those relationships.

### **Alumni to Alumni**

- Establish and utilize more tools for alumni to alumni communication.
  - Expand, update, promote class notes section of the website.
  - Include a check box on contact information collection sheets used at events to secure permission to share email addresses with event attendees in the follow-up letter.
- Solicit board members and volunteers to report alumni news.

### **Alumni to Students**

- Expand current student programming.
  - Host casual, alumni sponsored lunches (soda & hot dog) giveaways on the Quad.
- Increase Alumni Association presence on campus.

## Strategic Initiative Four

**Expand the value and promotion of the Alumni Association membership by expanding recruitment, transforming the membership process, expanding benefits, and better marketing of membership; with a portion of additional revenue gathered through the success of this strategic initiative going to support the hiring of additional staff.**

- Expand recruitment
  - Utilize alumni board members as recruiters. For willing board members, the association will give \_\_\_\_\_ free annual memberships to potential members who meet \_\_\_\_\_ criteria.
  - Focus efforts on young alumni recruitment activities through the continuation of young alumni events, and membership campaigns for graduates by friends and family. (promote membership sales at commencement and tie into a rose sale certificate.)

Reconnect with alumni members through the use of a phone drive for long lost members, and awareness phone drive for lost lifetime members, and on-campus alumni receptions with students, alumni, and the university.
- Transforming Membership Process
  - Provide “membership join” option at each event through polite and professional engagement and the utilization of an electronic device which allows for credit card transactions.

- Make an online connection with membership (who's an alumni?)
- Provide "ala carte" giving opportunities in conjunction with membership payment. (i.e. dollars for scholarships, programs, hosting an event, etc.)
- Provide recognition of new members through the alumni magazine and website.
- Expand membership benefits
  - Create a gap assessment of alumni needs (travel, pleasure, shopping, etc.)
  - Work with the university partners like Parking Services to provide alumni with a "red carpet" welcome. Establish discounts at every opportunity on campus
- Marketing membership
  - Partner with the University to fund a marketing campaign to showcase successful alumni.
  - Solicit alumni feedback through the use of an electronic survey in the monthly electronic newsletter.

### Values

- Respect:**
- Acknowledge and involve alumni and friends as vital stakeholders in SIUE.
  - Serve as an advocate for alumni for the purpose of representing their interests in working with SIUE constituencies as well as the broader community.
  - Treat personal information provided by alumni and friends in a professional and confidential manner at all times.
  - Recognize alumni contributions of time, talent, and treasure.
- Generosity:**
- Encourage alumni to make their time, talent, and treasure available to the benefit of the Association, SIUE, its programs, and students.
- Service:**
- Encourage alumni and friends to participate in and support the programs, services, and events of both the SIUE Alumni Association and SIUE.
  - Encourage alumni and friends to pursue leadership opportunities with the SIUE Alumni Association and throughout SIUE in such venues as advisory boards.
  - Encourage alumni and friends to serve in the broader community as ambassadors for SIUE and higher education in general.
  - Look for opportunities to work within the broader community on projects such as Habitat for Humanity.

- Strive to provide a level of customer service which positively impacts the experience had by SIUR alumni in dealing with the Association office and University.

#### Quality of Life:

- Ensure there is an element of “fun” in all alumni activities.
- Provide alumni opportunities for “lifelong learning” through SIUE Alumni Association sponsored activities and those offered by SIUE.
- Encourage alumni to make use of the current services offered through the SIUE Alumni Association and SIUE which can enhance the quality of life, such as the Career Development Center, and cultural and sporting activities.