

Office of Alumni & Parent Programs Priorities and Opportunities, 2006-2008

OVERALL GOAL: Engage alumni and parents individually and in groups by providing opportunities for Drake University's meaningful involvement in their lives, and for their meaningful involvement in the life of the University.

Objective 1: Present a variety of programs and services to nurture alumni and parent interaction and involvement with Drake University.

Overall goals:

- Work with Marketing & Communications to conduct a comprehensive survey of Drake alumni to better understand expectations, desired programming and services, generational and regional differences, and other opportunities for Drake to engage them and also be involved meaningfully in their lives.
- Continue to evaluate every event and its "return" on Drake's investment, as measured by attendance, donor outcomes, and subsequent connections made by Drake staff to individual alumni.

Programs

Case for current programs (below): These largely traditional programs celebrate Drake specifically and/or our alumni's lifelong affiliation with the University, and many alumni expect these activities. We have processes to support these activities. That said, we will continue to evaluate the events annually to adjust, enhance and/or discontinue as appropriate.

Market targets: Alumni, typically segmented by class year or geographic region, and parents of current Drake students

Technologies: Problems persist in ensuring mailing lists are correct, up to date, and reflective of such factors as seasonal addresses, "preferred" reunion years, etc. For parents, the question continues of which Drake office has "ownership" of parent information (registrar, student life, Alumni and Parent Programs, etc.)

- Reunions (Cluster and 50-Year Club):
 - Recruit active, engaged committees of 10-20 class members for each.
 - Attract at least 10 percent of class members for whom Drake has good addresses to each reunion.
 - Work with development to set an appropriate reunion class gift goal.
 - Promote attendance by faculty and staff who may know reunion classes.
 - Follow-up with each reunion class with online photo "albums," thank-you letters from the President, and opportunities for additional university engagement (e.g., outreach events, career mentoring).
- Homecoming:
 - Promote heavily to central Iowa alumni and former student athletes.
 - Utilize new facilities in stadium – "tent" end of field, President's box, Drake Plaza – for pre-game/tailgate activities.
 - Join forces with student life to make pre-game/tailgate event an all-Drake, all-campus event.

- Parents and Family Weekend:
 - Continue to work with student life to plan weekend activities.
 - Devise ways to heighten visibility of the Office of Alumni and Parent Programs during the weekend.
 - Assign Parents Board members as honorary “dignitaries” / Drake representatives during the weekend with special nametags.
- Relays (other than cluster reunions): We are re-evaluating the Alumni Tent. In 2006, it cost more than \$6,000 for the tent, decorations, and the pancake breakfast, yet the facility is under-utilized other than during lunch on Friday (which could be moved to Olmsted). We might “touch” more alumni by purchasing inexpensive give-aways and have staff circulate in the President’s box, at Peggy’s, outside the stadium, etc., and positioning the first level of Olmsted as the “indoor” alumni tent/reunion headquarters.
- Alumni Awards Dinner:
 - Work with Marketing & Communications to expand and enhance promotion of this event to all Drake alumni.
 - Also target promotions to classmates, co-workers, and other friends/family of award recipients.
 - Post on website Steve Berry’s performance from the previous year (cost is approximately \$200; we are pursuing this).
 - Consider suggestion to move event to Friday of Drake Relays weekend. NOTE: Friday evening Relays events/programming will need to be considered.
- “Let’s DU Lunch” central Iowa speaker series
 - Maintain three speakers/panels per semester.
 - Continue to consult with Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Central Iowa Alumni Chapter for speaker ideas.
 - Continue to promote to central Iowa alumni, past attendees, via local media, and on the website.
 - Promote to targeted classes / student groups as appropriate.
- Regional outreach
 - 125th birthday parties (what happens when Drake is 126?)
 - Bulldog Bashes: Move Chicago and Des Moines Bashes back to December. Make Des Moines event a pre-basketball game party.
 - Programming in cities/regions with 1,000+ alumni: central Iowa, Chicago, Twin Cities, Kansas City, Southern California, Denver, Phoenix
 - Parents Board calling project: Continue as a way for Parents Board members to connect with other parents of current students and promote Drake.
- Career networking: increase student opportunities and alumni involvement by working with partners across campus (academic, Professional & Career Development Services, athletics) to implement bluePrint (Simplicity)
 - See Objective 2 for details

- Other miscellaneous academic, college-based events
 - Consider assigning an Alumni Office team member to each college/school (one assistant director now is liaison to athletics, and another works with current student programming, including student life and career planning staff) to promote Drake and foster alumni involvement/giving to targeted alumni segments with events, speakers, services, and networks.

Other programming ideas / options:

- Continue to enhance and strategically expand alumni/athletic activities, including capitalizing on the new athletic director's arrival and utilization of Drake Plaza and Drake Stadium.
- Strategically plan reunions / programs for select affinity groups: young alumni, Greek members, student leaders, DVALI alumni, athletes
- Strategically use the President's home for selective groups of alumni
- Utilize students as speakers, performers, greeters, etc. at alumni events
- "Doughnuts / Dessert with Drake" – hold meet-and-greet sessions at select corporations that employ significant numbers of Drake alumni, to celebrate their alumni affiliation and promote alumni events, career networking/mentoring opportunities, athletic events, graduate programs, etc. Partner with staff in career networking, athletics, and admission to staff the events. Offer inexpensive Drake give-aways as well as doughnuts for morning sessions or cookies/cupcakes over the noon hour.

Benefits and Services

Case: By offering unique, special and valued benefits, Drake keeps alumni and parents informed and fosters their pride, loyalty and appreciation.

Market targets: Alumni and parents of current students

Current benefits and services should be evaluated as part of the alumni survey for their perceived value. They include "Blue" magazine; "eBlue" electronic newsletter; the alumni and parent websites; the upcoming print and online alumni directories; and options including the Drake credit card, travel programs, and auto insurance offered to parents for their Drake students.

Comments:

- Alumni / Parent Website: Maintain, update and enhance content. Consider assembling a task force of the Alumni Board of technology "experts" (including non-Board members and Drake faculty) to advise on the website and other uses of technology.
- Legacy Program ("gifts" for children of alumni; scholarship for enrolled children of alumni): Re-up program with inexpensive but Drake-branded gifts for alumni children at birth and ages 5, 10, and 15.
- Assign an assistant director to examine, evaluate and manage the travel program and monitor sales, receipts and promotions of the credit card.

- Merchandise: Work with athletics and the University Bookstore to better promote merchandise, including via website (currently dysfunctional).

Board Service, Management and Utilization

- Drake National Alumni Association Board:
 - Work with Board Executive Council this year to create “expectations and evaluations” for Board members
 - Ensure “best use of time and talent” at and between meetings by clearly defining goals and tasks
 - Create and utilize ad hoc task forces for specific projects – e.g., technology and career networking – to maximize Board contributions
 - Better communicate with Board members between meetings
- Drake Parents Board:
 - Focus activities in areas of greatest interest to parents and that benefit students
 - Keep Board members informed between their two meetings with regular e-mail updates on Drake
- Central Iowa Alumni Chapter:
 - Continue efforts to increase membership, focus mission and programming, and enhance contributions to Drake
- Chicago Advisory Board:
 - Work with board to plan for new members and reach consensus on programming.
 - Evaluate current programs – especially the golf outing and Schaumburg Flyers event – to improve attendance.

Objective 2: Improve and enhance programming and benefits for current students to introduce the philosophy of alumni involvement and philanthropy while they are at Drake University.

Comments: Ideas to explore include opportunities to connect current students with members of the Drake National Alumni Board and Board of Trustees as role models.

Career Networking—goal: increase student opportunities and alumni involvement by working with partners across campus (academic, Professional & Career Development Services, athletics) to implement bluePrint (Symplicity)

Case: bluePrint will create expanded and better-structured career networking, job posting, and mentoring opportunities via technology, telephone and in person. During this implementation year, 2006-07, staff will explore and develop best practices to connect students and alumni through bluePrint while tracking outcomes and experiences.

Market targets: 1) Drake alumni as job-seekers, job/internship-providers, and Drake student mentors; 2) Drake students as job/internship/mentor-seekers

Technologies: Symplicity and Banner. Alumni staff will work with colleagues in Professional and Career Development Services to manage Symplicity, and with Advancement Services to streamline requests from the Alumni staff and PCDS for alumni employed by company.

Budget: Symplicity expense covered by Provost Office in 2006-07; anticipate cost-sharing in subsequent years. Will need to produce communications vehicle (print and online) to promote bluePrint to alumni.

Assessments: Successful implementation and communication of bluePrint; participation of all Alumni Board and most Parents Board members as mentors; recruitment of other alumni as mentors. Will determine more specific benchmarks after this implementation year.

Current Students – strengthen the student-to-alumni transition

Year-by-Year Student-to-Alumni Programming

Case: Introducing students in their first year to their lifelong affiliation with Drake and their future fellow alumni will begin building their connections and loyalty to Drake; offering meaningful programs and services throughout their sophomore, junior and senior years will reinforce those connections. Overall goal: create future generations of loyal, active and supportive alumni.

We will work with partners in Student Life and Office of the Provost to ensure quality of programming, increase attendance and staff assistance, and explore cost-sharing.

Programs include:

- Welcome Weekend: As part of this festive, fun weekend, the Alumni Office introduces itself and the concepts of “alumni-hood” and “lifelong affiliation with Drake” to entering students. **Cost:** approximately \$1,000 for medallions given to first-year students.
- Sophomore social: NEW this year, this will be a social event – such as bowling, a movie, or trip to the Art Center – to build their Drake affinity and enhance their awareness of the Office of Alumni and Parent Programs. **Cost:** to be determined; estimated at \$1,000

- First-Year Seminar Reunions for juniors: As a capstone event for juniors NEW this year, hold a reunion of their First-Year Seminars so the students can reacquaint with friends, become more familiar with the Office of Alumni and Parent Programs and how reunions work, and begin the transition to Senior Experience. We will partner with offices across campus including student life, Office of the Provost, residence life, and faculty who taught the FYS. **Cost:** to be determined; estimated at \$1,000

Assessments for each program above will include surveys of participating students after each event. For the sophomore social and FYS seminars, we will recruit student committees to give input, encourage attendance by classmates, and provide feedback.

Senior Experience (capstone events for seniors)

Case: Guide seniors through their impending transition to “alumni-hood” via various activities (career, social, and philanthropic), so upon graduation they leave remembering Drake in a positive manner, better understand their roles and opportunities as alumni, and are familiar with the Office of Alumni & Parent Programs.

Market targets: Members of the senior class

Technologies: list of seniors is NOT accurate. We are working with student records to address this issue.

Budgets: \$4,500 for Senior Experience t-shirts, events, and give-aways.

Training/Staff Development: One assistant director and one Development staff member serve as primary Senior Experience Committee advisors. It’s important for other Alumni and I.A. staff to know SE members to mentor and cultivate them.

Assessments: Percentage of senior class who attend events; survey assessments by attendees after each event; percentage of class who give to the senior class gift; end-of-year assessments by Senior Experience Committee members.

Future Alumni Network

Case: FAN is committed to connecting students with Drake University and its alumni through learning and leadership opportunities, events, and Drake traditions. We will further strategize ways to meet this mission. One strategy: Increase interactions between FAN members and Alumni Office/I.A. staff and the Alumni Board. (Currently, two FAN members serve on the Alumni Board.)

Market targets: Current FAN members; other Drake students

Technologies: Use of Facebook.com has helped connect with this group.

Budgets: \$1,000/academic year

Training/Staff Development: One assistant director serves as primary advisor. It’s important for other Alumni and I.A. staff to know FAN members to mentor and cultivate them.

Assessments: Survey of FAN members’ experiences at the end of the year. We also need to enhance the group’s visibility on campus and determine how to gauge the impact of that visibility.

Current Alumni and Carpenter Scholars

Case: Enhance and expand connections between this key group of future alumni to Drake, to foster scholars’ affinity and loyalty to Drake and enhance their willingness to serve on the NAS selection committee as alumni. They are receiving a

significant scholarship from the University and need to understand the “responsibilities” that come with this investment in them and their future.

Market targets: Students who have received Alumni and Carpenter Scholarships

Technologies: We must ensure scholars are coded in Banner as such every year.

Budgets: \$550 for events

Training/Staff Development: One assistant director serves as primary advisor; it’s important for other Alumni and I.A. staff to know the scholars.

Assessments: Exit interviews with graduating scholars; subsequent participation by scholars as alumni in the National Alumni Scholarship Program, reunions, and giving (not systematically tracked at this point).

Programming for other student affinity groups

Case: As staff schedules and priorities allow, we will work to create and foster relationships with key student groups, including Student Body President, Student Senate, the Donald V. Adams Leadership Institute participants, Greek organizations, athletes, and “Leaders & Luminaries.” Strategies could be as simple as occasionally attending the groups’ meetings (e.g., Student Senate); meeting informally with select members; and inviting group members to have lunch with the Alumni Board.

We also will work with faculty and staff to explore having students participate in alumni/development events as performers, speakers, greeters and in other roles to connect them with alumni and Drake’s traditions.

Objective 3: Engage alumni and parents in meaningful student recruitment activities that support and enhance enrollment and retention of students at Drake University, and that foster alumni/parent affinity for Drake.

NOTE: Specific strategies and steps for admission/alumni programming will be developed in the coming months with the new Alumni Admission staff person in the Office of Admission and the new (third) assistant director in the Alumni Office.

Alumni Home Receptions— alumni now host in 18-20 cities annually. These have been proven to be an effective tool in motivating admitted students to enroll at Drake. Pending note above, these receptions will continue in targeted cities, with continued and enhanced planning for involving outstanding alumni as guests along with the alumni hosts.

Letter-writing Campaign – this involves letters from a young alumna/alumnus to prospective students; letters from “executive” alumni – such as Dan Jorndt and Bob Ray – to prospective parents; and letters from alumni by major to prospective students interested in those areas. Pending note above, we will work to enhance the process for selecting the letter writers for manageability and best impact on both participating alumni and prospective students, and work through cost issues with the Admission Office.

National Alumni Scholarship— this program attracts approximately 300 outstanding prospective students to Drake over two interview days in February; a positive percentage enroll at Drake even though they don’t receive a scholarship. Those who do receive an Alumni or Carpenter Scholarship also are considered future key alumni leaders. Pending note above, the Alumni Office wants to increase involvement of past Scholars (alumni) as NAS interviewers; to connect that experience with advancement; and ensure all scholars are coded in Banner annually.

Budget: \$2,000 to cover interview day expenses, including dinner for NAS alumni participants the Friday evening before each interview day (Saturday).

College Fairs— Pending note above, we want to work with alumni database staff and the senior advancement officers to identify alumni “ambassadors” in strategic cities, chosen by Admission, to represent Drake at select college fairs; and work with the Admission Office to staff program and provide volunteers with training and support. We also will explore terminating the Alumni Office’s financial support of college fair fees.

Objective 4: Assist Annual Funds and Development by identifying alumni and parents for cultivation and to increase the number of gift prospects.

NOTE: This objective and draft strategies below have not been examined by alumni and development staff. This should be a collaborative effort. Some strategies below, such as writing call reports, are ongoing; others, such as roles for Alumni Board members in peer solicitation, should be discussed and developed.

- Provide staff training on how to identify gift prospects
- Write call reports on significant contacts with individual alumni
- Devise ways to communicate the need for the Annual Fund and the opportunity to give at all alumni events
- Distribute event recap forms, shared with major gift staff and Annual Fund director, after alumni events
- Create new codes to identify and track new prospects in the alumni and development database
- Explore/define appropriate roles for Alumni Board and Parents Board members in effective peer solicitation

Objective 5: Establish and implement plans and evaluations that ensure departmental priorities and use of resources serve and support the mission of Drake University.

Collaboration with partners in Institutional Advancement and across campus:

- Create, maintain, and expand positive working relations across campus that benefit alumni, parents and students and that serve Drake's mission (athletics, admission, student life, colleges/schools/NABs, dining/facilities staff, etc.)

Budget that appropriately supports alumni services, events, staff travel, volunteer appreciation, etc.:

- Ensure adequate staff and funding to consistently and effectively manage multiple programs on the campus calendar and across the country, including efforts in volunteer appreciation.

Staff:

- Maintain annual goals for each staff person to ensure performance and accountability.
- Support efforts in continuing education and development, including participation in professional conferences.

Volunteers:

- Create a system to recruit, inspire, train, support, evaluate, appreciate, and reward volunteers in programs including the Alumni Board, Parents Board, Chicago Advisory Board, Central Iowa Alumni Chapter, outreach event committees, Bulldog Bashes, Des Moines Arts Festival, World Food Fest, Iowa State Fair, National Alumni Scholarship Program, other student recruitment efforts, and other non-Alumni Office groups (Presidents Circle Board, NAC's, Board of Counselors, etc.) IF appropriate.