Developing Partnerships with Alumni Relations

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Enhancing the Student Experience Conference
November 11, 2010
London, UK

Overview

- Understanding the Lifelong Relationship
- Identifying and Recruiting Young Alumni
- Communications in 2010
- Programming: Tips for Success and Pitfalls to Avoid
- Stewarding a Positive Volunteer Experience

Lifecycle of Alumni

Current Students
(undergrad and grad)

Young Alumni & New
Professionals (relocating often)

Mid-Career with
And w/o families

Career Achievers
or Changing Careers
Prospective Parents
and Empty Nesters

Retired and
Potentially Active

Prospective
Students and Legacy Families

Three R's and Young Alumni: Recruitment, Retention and Recognition

- Recruitment & Recognition – honoring graduating seniors
  Showcase student speakers to regional events

- Admissions and Alumni Relations – easy opportunities to involve new graduates
  Interview prospective students; speak at high schools, represent school at college fair – provide testimonials and realistic overview of college experience

  ****PLUS – these may be one-time opportunities affording minimal planning and they are easy for new grad to execute**

- Recognition – honoring service or excellence
  Young Alumni Awards Program – nominations from entire community

Many Definitions for Young Alumni

- GOLD – Graduates of the Last Decade
- Recent graduates
- Alumni under 35
- Graduate students and their young alumni from professional programs
- Non-traditional alumni – where do they fit?
- Cross-departmental definition at Institution

Recruiting Students and Young Alumni Volunteers

- What is exciting to new grads?
  - New, fun, social, opportunity to “give back”, job opportunities and professional networking
- Connect with students before graduation
- What is the “entry level” for a volunteer?
  - Interviewing perspective students
  - Affinity/Shared Interest Groups
  - Regional Chapters
  - Reunion Committee
  - Fundraising Officer
  - Active Citizenship events

Communications in 2010

- Facebook for events
- Twitter for communications
- LinkedIn for Professional Connections
- Blogs for more in-depth information
- Alumni Association needs to have a presence in the Web 2.0 Space
- Email and traditional methods still work

Programming:
Student and Alumni Programming

Alumni Career Services – tips during job searches, transitions and recession

Example: Industry Nights hosted by established alumni grouped by profession. Include keynote, workshops and networking.

Example: Winternship Week – Held between fall and spring terms, this week pairs undergraduate students with alumni hosts for 1-2 weeks of in-depth learning. Alumni chapters will host events during this time.

Student-Alumni Sponsored Speaker Series

- Example: **The Lyon & Bendheim Alumni Lecture Series**

  The Lyon & Bendheim Alumni Lecture Series at Tufts was established by JB Lyon, A85, and Tom Bendheim, A85. Alumni lecturers are chosen because they are leaders who have repeatedly proven themselves with tremendous achievements at the highest levels in their respective fields. Tom Bendheim explained that, "Our goal for starting the lecture series was to bring prominent and successful alumni to campus to share their wisdom and experience with the students. The students benefit, the alumni feel good about being asked and about speaking, and Tufts ultimately benefits in terms of alumni support and overall exposure as a school that breeds highly successful professionals in all fields.

  http://www.tufts.edu/alumni/lyonbendheim/index.html

Young Alumni Reunions

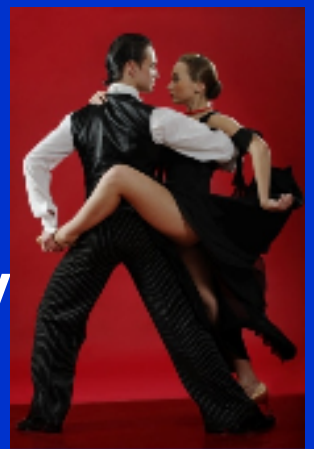
- For some schools, Young Alumni have an entirely separate Reunion/Alumni Weekend
- Tufts will experiment with this approach in 2011:
  - Young Alumni are looking to re-live their college experience
  - Low cost events are preferred
  - Informal and outdoor programs
  - Little formal speaking
  - Festival, concert, DJ, casual events
  - Stay in the dorms
  - Brand the weekend with logo and title
  - Pitfalls to avoid: volunteers may have opinions that conflict with the institution; return on investment; metrics

Stewardship: Creating a Culture of Giving

- Survey graduating seniors about their attitudes towards philanthropy
  - Reinforced in college because “giving back” is an important value of your institution – helping the institution that helped you
- Anticipate obstacles to giving and create pathways for more participation
- Create programming which is funded by donations alone – example…..

Student & Young Alumni Dance Party…all for at least two causes

- Make it a free event
- Schedule in opening weeks of the year: "Welcome Week"
- Solicit sponsors: host, location, catering assistance
- Encourage an optional cover charge – to be counted as a gift to University
- Stress the uniqueness of event
- Create E-vite invitation – access to responses and comments
- Follow up with pictures and share comments
- Evaluate Student and Young Alumni satisfaction



****Benefits include building relationships, affinity and support for future programs**

Some Closing Thoughts…

- Early engagement
- Ongoing connections
- Define the expectations for evaluating the success of programs
- We can overcome obstacles by inviting Students and Young Alumni to create their own programs
- Innovation: Creativity, Flexibility, Adaptability
- Communications that are effective

Thank You & Questions

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TuftsAlumni

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