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Alumni Association Executive Board, Illinois Wesleyan University

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**Illinois Wesleyan University Alumni Association
Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting
May 1, 2004**

Board members present: Mark Aubry '95, Jean Baird '80, Brittany Becker '05, Kris Condon '84, Todd French '93, Jim Graehling '72, Deon Hornsby '97, Scott Huch '86, Esteban Lizano '01, Tom Neis '70, Larry Rollings '67, Mark Sheldon '70, Tracy Wych '77

Board members unable to attend: Pat Bass '66, Ray Berger '70, Debra Burt-Frazier '75, Jennifer Frahm '94, Sherry Graehling '72, Marsha Guenzler-Stevens '78, Ansel Johnson '81, Marilyn Neis '71, Barb Nielsen '85, Amy Tenhouse '97

IWU Administration/Staff present: Mary Bible, Emmalyn Dickinson, Jennifer Lehman, Janet McNew, Sara Powell '72, Beth Raboin-Gettleman '99, Steve Seibring '81, Lora Wey '88

Welcome and Introductions:

Mark Sheldon opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for all their work this past year. He introduced Mark Aubry '95, the new Annual Fund chair, and Brittany Becker '05, the new Student Alumni Council president.

Mark recognized all the staff members in attendance and noted that since the Executive Board's last meeting Lora Wey has been promoted to Director of the Annual Fund.

Mark reminded members that their annual fund donations are due to the University by July 31st. We need to show 100% participation.

Approval of the Minutes from the October 10, 2003 Executive Board Meeting:

Mark Sheldon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2003 Executive Board meeting. The Executive Board voted to approve the minutes as presented.

Executive Board President's Report:

Mark Sheldon reported that the University's Mission Statement was formally approved at the last Board of Trustees' meeting. A draft of the Vision Statement will be considered by the Trustees at their May meeting.

Mark also reported that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee is releasing a document addressing the strategies for increasing diversity at IWU. The need to increase diversity was identified both in the Multicultural Task Force Report and the North Central Accreditation Report. The Board of Trustees has made "diversity" a planning priority.

Mark noted the great job that Mark Aubry and his committee are doing with regard to the annual fund. They have set realistic goals and are taking the necessary steps to achieve them.

Mark stated that this is a transition year in many ways for the IWU community with a new university president, a new vice president for business and finance, and a new president for the Executive Board. Mark noted that the afternoon session of the Executive Board has been designed to address how everyone on the Executive Board can be involved in helping meet various needs of the University.

University Update:

Mark thanked Janet McNew for her fine work in keeping the University moving forward this past year and, particularly, for her interest and activism with the alumni.

Janet McNew began her report by acknowledging the contributions made by Mark Sheldon to the successful formation of the Alumni Association. She also recognized Steve Seibring for his hard work on the staff side in creating the new structure for the Alumni Association.

Janet continued by thanking Executive Board member Tracy Wych and her father for their \$100,000 contribution to create the Harriet Statton Tracy Scholarship Fund.

Janet reported that Richard Wilson, IWU's new president, will start on July 1st. She stated that he is a marvelous man who brings a strong skill set with him from the University of Illinois where he was in charge of a \$1 billion campaign. Janet described him as very highly skilled and, also, very human. He began his career in higher education at Alderson-Broaddus College in West Virginia. He was drawn to IWU because of the coherent community that is characteristic of a smaller institution. Janet reported that he will be here for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee report on Monday and for the Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday. He has been on campus at least once a week since he was named the new president. Janet described President Wilson as a great listener with true humility.

Janet also reported that Dan Klotzbach will be replacing Ken Browning as Vice President of Business and Finance. Ken Browning is retiring. Janet noted that IWU received over 120 applications for this position of which 25 – 30 were from sitting executive business officers. Klotzbach will begin June 1st. He is currently vice president of Edgewood College in Madison, WI. In the five years he was at Edgewood, the college doubled its size and doubled its endowment. His wife is from Bloomington. She currently works as a part time music instructor at Lawrence University. Janet feels they will be a marvelous addition to our staff.

Janet reported that IWU is in the process of raising funds for the Minor Myers Welcome Center. The University has received a major gift from State Farm to

support this effort. A major gift was also given by Kent Wallace (his gift began the project). Steve Wannemacher, Craig Hart and Herb Getz have also pledged major gifts.

The plan for the Welcome Center is to convert the existing Methodist Conference Center into offices for Admissions, Alumni Relations and the Career Center. Janet noted that the conference center is a good location with good parking. The next step in the process is to have architects look at the building. Also, when Admissions relocates, the offices in Holmes Hall will be reconfigured.

In response to a question regarding the status of Sheean Library, Janet reported that a cost/benefit analysis of remodeling the building for another use showed that the University would be better served by razing it and constructing a new building. Long-range plans are to build a classroom/office building architecturally similar to the Ames Library.

The Master Plan also includes razing McPherson and building a new theatre on Park Street across from Holmes Hall. A new administration building to replace Holmes Hall is also included in the long-range plan.

Janet reported that the time frame for these buildings is contingent on acquiring the funds. The University needs to finance the new buildings in a different way than through bonds. The University does not want to increase its bond debt.

Janet concluded her remarks by reporting that Jim Ruoti would not continue with the alumni/admissions project this coming year. He has decided to take full retirement.

Board of Trustees Report:

Tom Neis reported that the last meeting of the Board of Trustees focused on the issue of diversity. He feels the University is well-positioned for the future with its new president and highly professional and experienced leadership on the Board of Trustees.

Via e-mail message, Phyllis Barker thanked the Alumni Association for giving her the opportunity to represent it on the Board of Trustees. She continued by reporting that she feels Alumni Association representatives to the Board of Trustees need to be retained for more than one term in order to be effective and influential members of the group. She noted that all trustees who held important positions on the Board had been members of the governing body for many years. She concluded by recommending that the Executive Board form a succession planning strategy committee to put together a list of alums to be considered for election to the Board with the list being reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Jean Baird distributed the Vision Statement draft that will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval. She noted that almost every word in the draft had been debated and careful attention was given to the choice of phrasing.

Jean also distributed the draft of the diversity goal and strategies that was approved by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee on April 23, 2004. She asked members to familiarize themselves with this draft. She noted that the next step for the planning committee is to determine how the process will be measured.

Tracy Wych recommended that if the planning committee had not already done so, it should talk to professionals outside of the academic community about their diversity programs.

Tom Neis concluded the trustee report by expressing his feeling that the Board of Trustees is definitely moving in the right direction.

Office of Alumni Relations Report:

Steve Seibring reported that the Alumni Association and the Alumni Office had undergone a number of changes over the past few years due, in large part, to the activities of the Alumni Executive Board—with alumni representation on the Board of Trustees being the most visible change.

Steve noted the great job that Jerry Pope (Dean of Admissions) has done this past year representing IWU to various constituencies across the country. He recommended that if members of the Executive Board have an opportunity to involve Jerry in an alumni function, they should.

Steve reported that the Alumni Office recently relocated to the south end of campus and is currently working on decorating the facility with historical pictures and memorabilia. He invited the Executive Board members to visit the new office, noting that this is a temporary location until the new Welcome Center is ready.

Steve highlighted the following activities and accomplishments of the Alumni Association and the Alumni Office:

General Highlights

- The report of the consultant who visited the campus in January 2004 to look at the activities of the Office of University Advancement noted that the Alumni Association and the Alumni Office are asking all the right questions and doing all the right things, but we are about 10 – 15 years behind those schools that have had formal organizations for 50 years or more.
- Dick Wilson, IWU's new president, has a background and history in promoting the university externally via alumni and development.

On-campus Activities

- Heightened awareness on campus for the Alumni Association and its activities demonstrated by the fact that the Student Senate President initiated a call to the Alumni Office requesting a meeting to determine how the two areas can work together.

- An IWU marketing class chose to study the Alumni Association and how students view it and their relationship to alumni groups. Useful information was gathered and a formal report will be completed this summer.
- IWU faculty have reached out to the Alumni Office with more frequency—calling and e-mailing the office with ideas. Sponsors of Co-choir, Soccer, Nursing, Art, and Theater are now putting together newsletters to send to their constituencies.
- The creation of the Welcome Center is due in part to the Executive Board. An alumni committee will be needed to help design the center.

Off-campus Activities

- Cohesive, active alumni groups have been created in many alumni regions.
- The alumni admissions project has been initiated in some regions. The Minneapolis region is up and running and alumni have been recruited in Cincinnati, Denver, Phoenix, and Washington D.C. Further activity is dependent on the resources available in the Admissions Office.

Improved Communications

- E-connection
- Web Site
- Online Directory

Steve also noted that the Alumni Association still faces a lot of challenges including the following:

- Complete filling the spokes on the Alumni Association organization wheel (Academic Advisory Committee, Alumni Admissions Committee, and Career Networking Committee)
- The Alumni Office needs to make sure the Executive Board is kept better informed about what is going on between meetings.

Steve concluded by expressing his appreciation to the members for what they have done over the past two years in providing leadership to the Alumni Association during its formative stage.

Alumni Annual Fund Committee Report:

Mark Aubry, who took over the leadership of the Annual Fund in January 2004, reported the following:

- 2004 participation goal = 35% (5,500 alums including 878 new donors)
YTD results: 4,400 alumni participants and 675 new donors. The fund year concludes on July 31, 2004.

- Established an Alumni Fund Executive Board made up of the decade champs (Esteban Lizano, Harold Gauthier, Tim Brophy, Tom Monken, Mark Metzger, Jane Locascio, Jerry Philpott, and Chet and Helen Sheldon). The reason for this structure is to provide improved support for class agents and improved accountability for the process.

Regional Activities Report:

Scott Huch provided a brief overview of regional activities. He noted that there are currently 34 alumni regions in the U.S. populated with 100 or more alums. And, about 1/3 of these regions have either an active chair or an active alumni committee in place to manage regional activities.

Scott identified four issues that need to be addressed in order to advance regional activities to the next level. The issues were:

- Expanding regional leadership. We need to determine how we can involve more people.
- Budgeting expenditures. Scott feels it would be valuable for the regional leaders to have a budget to work with. A budget would help them be able to more effectively plan activities for the region. He also recommended that the Alumni Office develop a streamlined process for alumni volunteers to submit their receipts for out-of-pocket expenses. Volunteers need to be given credit for their gift as well as for tax purposes.
- Putting greater emphasis on fundraising. Scott recommended that a subcommittee of the regional board be established to encourage alumni leadership giving. He emphasized that more needs to be done to encourage the regional groups to give a greater emphasis to fundraising.
- Improving communication. Scott stated that the person on the Executive Board responsible for regional clubs should have personal and regular contact with all the regional presidents. This person completes the communication circle between the Alumni Association, the Alumni Office and the Region. He emphasized that we need to determine what resources are available to support improved communication.

Scott noted that a report on regional activities for 2002 – 2003 was included in the Executive Board members packets. The report showed the following:

- 63% of alumni who attend events become donors.
- Of those alumni who attend an event and then make a gift, 50% are likely to increase their gift.
- 25% of those who make gifts after attending an event are new donors.
- 16% of everyone who attended an event became new donors.

Tracy Wych noted that she has observed that the most successful alumni associations are supported by a very strong infrastructure at the university level.

Alumni Association Strategic Plan:

Steve Seibring reported that a copy of the Alumni Association Strategic Plan was included in each members packet of information. He noted that the plan needs to be updated and he asked members to take some time to review the plan and provide feedback to the Alumni Office.

Homecoming/Reunions:

Steve Seibring reported that Ray Berger was unable to attend today's meeting because of an unavoidable business conflict. He noted that Ray has written a job description for his position and has recruited the reunion volunteers for 2004 (a list of volunteers was included in the member packets). Ray is currently in the process of recruiting volunteers for the 2005 reunions.

Mary Bible reported that a number of faculty members have expressed interest in doing back-to-college classes. She noted that some alums have asked to present back-to-college classes.

Lunch and Speaker:

The Executive Board adjourned for lunch. During the lunch break, board members heard remarks from Professor Narendra Jaggi on the importance of diversity in the college experience. Professor Jaggi, who is professor of physics at IWU and was named Illinois Professor the Year (2003-2004), emphasized that higher education must be inclusive. He noted that if we are going to produce the nation's leaders, the people we are teaching should be truly representative of the population of the United States.

Minority Alumni Network Report:

Deon Hornsby reported that the Network is currently working on the MAN picnic to be held in August. The picnic gives the Minority Alumni Network members the opportunity to introduce themselves to incoming students and to reconnect and reenergize for the upcoming year.

Deon presented the Network's goals for the coming year. The goals are:

- Increase participation. Particularly tap into the resources of the 1998 – 2002 alums.
- Increase fundraising.
 - increase the number who give
 - complete year end annual fund letter

Deon noted that the Network is working to include minority alumni of all colors and ethnicity. The network will be contacting all new minority alumni soon after graduation to advise them of the Minority Alumni Network.

Newsletter and Communications Report:

Kris Condon reported on the status of newsletter communications and the transition of volunteers from newsletter editor to class secretaries. She noted that the Class of 1984 is being used as a beta test for evaluating class communication via the Web site. The class Web site will be connected to the University Web site. The address is sun.iwu.edu/~alumni/newsletters. There will be a link for every class. Messages can be posted on the class message board. Also, a copy of the message will go to the newsletter editor for inclusion in the next class newsletter. She emphasized that it is important to blend electronic communication with the personal touch that has been a part of past newsletters.

The new schedule for newsletters is as follows;

- Non-reunion year classes receive one newsletter per year (summer).
- Reunion year classes will receive two newsletters per year (late winter/early spring and summer).

Kris noted that the next step in this process will be the training and planning for newsletter editors.

Steve Seibring pointed out that everyone should see Kris' last newsletter. Her newsletter is a model for every newsletter.

Kris is currently working to identify some templates to help newsletter editors write their class newsletter on the Web.

Promotional plans for getting people to the Web site include advertising in the IWU Magazine, encouraging people to bookmark the site, and promoting the site in e-connection. Kris has also proposed handing out cards promoting the Web site at reunion.

Nominating Committee Report:

Larry Rollings presented the Nominating Committee's recommendations as follows:

Trustee.....Todd French '93

Alumni Award Recipients

Distinguished Alum.....Judy Favell '66

Robert M. Montgomery Outstanding Young Alum.....Peter Haas '88

Loyalty Award.....Kent Wallace '62

Executive Board Officers

President.....Jean Baird '80
Vice President.....Todd French '93
Secretary.....Larry Rollings '67

New Executive Board Members

Guy Gebhardt '69
Munerah Maalik '00
IWU Student Senate President (Trevor Sierra for 2004- 2005)
Mark Aubry '95 (took over duties of Annual Fund Chair in January 2004)

The Nominating Committee's roster of candidates was unanimously approved by the Executive Board.

Larry also presented the Nominating Committee's recommendations for special awards as follows:

Multicultural Task Force (for its work on diversity)

Rick Bata (for his outstanding work in restoring the lobby ceiling of the Hansen Student Center)

The Executive Board approved both these recommendations.

Alumni Association Research Report:

Todd French reported the results of his recent study of other alumni associations. Todd surveyed Carleton, Wooster, Williams and Colorado College. From his research, he stated that he would be making the following two motions:

1. The Executive Board meetings be two days in length.
2. A career networking committee be established.

Todd also asked the Executive Board to consider the following;

- Use more focus groups.
- Promote more mini-reunions (MAN, football players, music majors, etc.)
- Present alumni awards at Convocation rather than Homecoming (puts the focus on student awareness of outstanding alumni and their achievements. It should provide inspiration to students).
- Increase student/alumni interaction at Executive Board meetings and Volunteer Leadership Workshop (plan events that will include students as a way to transition them to active alumni).
- Combine the Volunteer Leadership Workshop with the Executive Board meeting (proposed meeting date the second weekend in September).
- Target alumni who have participated in any alumni event once to recruit as volunteers.

- Increase committee communication between meetings via e-mail, conference calls, etc. Assign a staff liaison for every Executive Board Committee.
- Develop a budget for the Alumni Association. (Todd noted that our budget is a fraction of what the other colleges have. He recommended we present a proposal on staffing and budgets to the University.)
- Offer reimbursement (travel, hotels, etc.) to volunteers.

The Executive Board approved the following motions:

- The Executive Board meetings will cover two days (specific scheduling will be determined later).
- The Volunteer Leadership Workshop will be held during the school year and in conjunction with the Executive Board meeting.
- Establish a Career Networking Committee.

As a result of the motions, the following committees were formed:

Volunteer Leadership Workshop Committee

Mark Aubry – Chair

Jim Graehling

Sherry Graehling

Kris Condon

Todd French

Marilyn Neis

Staff liasions: Steve Seibring and Mary Bible

Career Networking Committee

Todd French – Chair

Mark Aubry

Larry Rollings

Tracy Wych

Staff liasions: Steve Seibring and Warren Kistner

Executive Board Committee Assignments:

Following discussion of Todd French's report on alumni associations, Mark Sheldon asked that all Executive Board members be assigned to a committee. Assignments were made as follows:

Homecoming Committee

Jennifer Frahm

Staff liasions: Steve Seibring and Mary Bible

Reunion Committee

Ray Berger – Chair

Barb Nielsen

Staff liasions: Steve Seibring and Mary Bible

Regional Committee

Scott Huch – Chair

Guy Gebhardt

Regional Presidents

Staff liaison: Beth Raboin-Gettleman

Annual Fund Committee

Mark Aubry – Chair

Esteban Lizano

Decade Champs, Class Chairs, and Class Agents

Staff liaison: Lora Wey

Minority Alumni Network Committee

Ansel Johnson – Co-chair

Debra Burt-Frazier – Co-chair

Deon Hornsby

Muneerah Maalik

Staff liaison: Beth Raboin-Gettleman

Nominations and Awards Committee

Larry Rollings – Chair

Jean Baird

Amy Tenhouse

Staff liaison: Steve Seibring

Student Alumni Council Committee

Brittany Becker – SAC president

Amie Overmier – Alumni Advisor

Staff liaison: Steve Seibring and Emmalyn Dickinson

Alumni Admissions Committee

Jean Baird – Chair

Todd French

Scott Huch

Tracy Wych

Mark Aubry

Malik Jones

Staff liaisons: Steve Seibring and Jerry Pope

Academic Advisory Committee

Jean Baird

Staff liaison: Steve Seibring

Welcome Center Committee

Jean Baird

Tom Neis

Todd French

Larry Rollings

Jim Graehling
Pat Bass
Marsh Guenzler-Stevens
Staff liaison: Steve Seibring

Technology
Jim Graehling
Staff liaison: Steve Seibring

Newsletters/Class Communication Committee
Kris Condon – Chair
Staff liaison: Steve Seibring

Executive Board Communications Committee
Jean Baird
Todd French
Marsha Guenzler-Stevens
Tracy Wych
Staff liaison: Steve Seibring

Adjournment:

Mark Sheldon adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m. The Executive Board proceeded to a private reception at the Ames Library followed by the public unveiling of the Minor Myers, jr. sculpture.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Rollings '67
IWU Alumni Association
Executive Board Secretary

Future Meetings:

The next meeting of the IWU Alumni Association Executive Board is scheduled for Thursday, September 16 and Friday, September 17, 2004.

The Volunteer Leadership Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, September 18, 2004.