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Minutes

Alumni Association Board of Directors

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April 9, 2010

Alumni Association Executive Board, Illinois Wesleyan University

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**Illinois Wesleyan University Alumni Association
Minutes of the Alumni Council and Executive Board
April 9, 2010**

Board Members Present: Brian Beam `91, Kathryn Breisch `11, Todd French `93, Tracy Garrett `81, Guy Gebhardt `69, Marsha Guenzler-Stevens `78, Tony Gray `98, Scott Huch `86, Elly Jones `91, Dean Jukovich `93, Shaye Mandle `93, Rich Marvel `98, Jim Mullins `03, Molly Rollings `99, Jen Shaughnessy `98, Larry Stimpert `80, Marianne Wolf-Astrauskas `76, Tracy Wych `77

IWU administration/staff present: Ann Harding, Jeff Mavros `98, Trevor Sierra `05, Richard Wilson, Natalie Schmidt

Meeting called to order at 9:20a.m.

Marsha opened meeting by thanking Todd French for his leadership.

President Wilson's Report

- President Wilson thanked Todd French for his service.
- The University is in the end of the year sprint with one event after another until the end of the term.
- Classroom building has been put on pause until the last 2.5 million dollars are raised.
- Accreditation team on campus working with strategic plan that was put into place when the President came to the University. The team is using this as an opportunity to make it a functional process for the University. Jim Matthews, former Dean of Students is chairing the committee along with Michael Thompson, Director of Institutional Research and Planning Committee.
- Plan that was developed for budget last fall is unfolding as anticipated with no surprises so far.
- Every reason to believe that the year will end with a balanced budget.
- The budget plan also results in balanced budget for next year as long as there are no unforeseen problems and enrollment goal is met.
- The University is in the critical month for enrollment and right now deposits are running 15% ahead of last year.
- When Campaign was announced last May we were at 73 million dollars towards a 125 million dollar goal. In order to meet that target in five years, 10 million dollars a year needs to be raised. We crossed the 80 million dollar mark two weeks ago and need to pick up another 2-3 million dollars by the end of the fiscal year. That is entirely doable.
- Wesleyan Fund is on target to meet its goal.
- Men's and Women's basketball teams made it to the NCAA tournament.
- Indoor track team finished fourth in National tournament.
- The University recently had four students selected by the Council on International Educational Exchange to participate in a week long program in South Korea as part of there experience at Wesleyan. There were only 75 students chosen nationwide and Wesleyan had four of them.

Questions for President Wilson

- Did the University have to adjust strategy for enrollment? Did the University accept more applicants? What is the rise in deposits attributed to?
The University did several things as a result of being off last year, one being an early action process. This allowed the University to inform students early with admissions decisions and to make and keep contact with the student. The second thing, in the past the University built a waiting list of kids that sort of looked like they might be admitted but we wanted to wait and see how other students looked before taking action. The problem with that strategy is by March or April those students have found another school. So the University decided to admit kids that looked like they ought to be admitted from the onset. The University has had some very successful events with record attendance at open houses.
- In regards to the new building, is there a bidding process and do we open it up to public bids? How are the contractors chosen?
What we currently have is not a bid, this is an architect's estimate of how much it cost. It has not been put out to bid but it will be.
- Is there an anticipation that the MAP grant for next year will come back to the level it was two years ago or is it going to go away or be diminished?
The MAP grant gets funded ahead of all public higher education in Illinois because the money goes directly to students. It is anticipated the state will do to us in the coming year what they did this past year. Which is to say, that there is enough money to fund the fall semester and the spring semester will be determined after the election.
- Are we looking for particular donations targeted to the new building or are there other ways to fund that 2 million dollar short fall?
The strategy at the moment to get the other 2.5 million dollars is to try and do it by naming space in and around the building. The biggest naming opportunity is the graduation area in front of the building which is a high profile area and will be featured in commencement programming forever. Inside the building there have been cost estimates done for each class room, each seminar room and each space in the building. It will be decided what the cost of those spaces will be.

Student Senate Report

Senate President Kathryn Breisch

- Main Goal this year was to revitalize senate activity and improve senate's connection with campus.
- Exec board has been examining senate, asking critical questions about procedures that have been done for a long time and that no one is sure why they are done. Many of the procedures are founded and legitimized in traditions that make some procedures obsolete.
- Senate is trying to update things to cater more to the students we have now.
- Young board is bringing fresh ideas.
- There is more delegation from executive board to senate floor, insuring that senators are engaging their constituents.
- Each senator was provided with a senate 101 folder, which explains the procedures and answers frequently asked questions.
- Senate has conducted surveys to get more feed back from constituents.
- To get new senators and to reach more students, senate has begun to use many different media outlets on campus including a commercial for Titan TV, a recurring column in the Argus and better use of Facebook and senate web site.
- Opened up committees to entire campus to get more involvement.

Alumni Office Report

Ann Harding

- On campus there is heightened awareness of alumni activity, due to the good work of the Alumni Association and the Alumni Office.
- As a result more departments are partnering with the Alumni Office and utilizing our services.
- Electronic communication is playing a larger role in the work of Alumni Office. Newsletters from 1960 forward have all gone electronic increasing the need for email addresses and contact information for alums. This also helps the department save money.
- TitanPride is being redesigned. There have been focus groups to help decide how to make it more user friendly.
- Off campus friend raising activities are crucial to the campaign. Since last meeting there have been 38 alumni gatherings.
- Homecoming Planning Committee has been meeting. Homecoming theme is "Homecoming and All That Jazz".
- This theme was chosen to capitalize on Dr. Tom Streeter, who is retiring after 40 years. All of the Jazz Band members have been invited to come back and perform both Friday and Saturday nights.
- There will be a Magill Reunion, Hispanic Studies, Anniversary of Evans Observatory and Honoring Lou Detweiler and Ray Wilson.
- Homecoming brochure will be in the magazine this year rather than mailed out.

Greek Alumni Network

Shaye Mandle

- As a group the network is not as outwardly visible as it needs to be.
- Confident that the network is on the path to re-launching the organization.
- There are some real issues that are being faced that encompass the financial scenarios being faced as a University and generational and cultural change that have potential to be destructive or great for the University.
- All fraternity houses are owned by University and it is not working.
- Alumni have largely been disengaged with the undergraduates, resulting in undergraduates being clueless about what their houses mean and the traditions.
- They do not have any ownership so they are more destructive.
- They are not monitoring paying dues. Guys are moving out so there are capacity issues and for University-owned facilities that is a financial component.
- All of this can and will be fixed.
- Shaye had meeting with President Wilson, Dean Cavins, Physical Plant and Business and Finance in which the objective was to level set.
- Shaye has committed to the University that there will be identifiable committed alumni groups for each of the houses.
- A lot of issues will be worked through in partnership which may include running house dues through the University.
- To organize the GAN, a letter is being worked on to let Greek alums know where the organization is going.
- Shaye wants to have a formal identifiable board with officers, with three representatives from each house.
- One group would be a peer to peer networking group.
- One group would be those alums that are really interested in the roles they can play in our undergraduate's lives, focusing on mentorship.
- One group of people to work with the University and administration on the health and welfare of the Greek system.

Pride Alumni Community

Ann Harding for Josh Butts and Ray Berger

- Josh is working on campus with Roshaunda Ross, Director of Multi-Cultural Affairs, and the president of the student Pride group for programming for the current student body.
- Ray wants to have more pride events in the regions, especially the Chicago region.
- They will be having another event on campus during Homecoming.
- Jennifer Shaughnessy would like "safe zones" created on campus. A safe zone is a place where any student can find support and help.

Alumni Admissions Network

Jennifer Shaughnessy

- It is becoming more important to have alums involved in the admissions process because Wesleyan set the bar for personal attention and now all the schools are giving personal attention.
- In terms of money, the University is not meeting the full demonstrative needs of our students so we have to convince parents and students that Wesleyan is worth it. Parents and students can see the value by engaging with alums.
- Currently there are 206 alums assisting with the Alumni Admissions Network.
- This year each member is emailing 10 admitted students saying hello and congratulating them and offering their help.
- Involving the parents more is being done by adding the parents email address to the email being sent to the student.
- Looking into coffee sessions which would allow potential students to talk with an alum in a local coffee shop about their experience at IWU.
- Jennifer is thinking about getting more of an alumni presence at Scholars Day events; would alums be interested in this?
- Ann suggested having spring Alumni Association meeting on the Scholars Day weekend.

Wesleyan Fund Update

Jeff Mavros

- Under the gun to raise 3.3 million in unrestricted funds. At this point we are about 85% to goal two thirds of the way through the fiscal year. Dollar wise feeling good about where we are.
- Up in dollars and on individuals and down a little with corporations and foundations.
- Alumni donor front we are about exactly where we want to be to reach goal for alumni donors.
- Giving circles are underway and have done fairly well to boost participation. It has been an intentionally slow process as to not grow it faster than it can be managed.
- Have an alum helping with an online tool to help roll giving circle program out to the next level and to help with the administration.
- This program is acquiring new donors and new dollars and upgrading people to gifts.

Parent Board

Jeff Mavros

- To date the Parent Board has raised \$95 thousand dollars this year.
- Up about five hundred dollars from this time last year.
- There were five recipients this year.
- Last year's total was \$110 thousand raised and it looks like that amount will be reached again.
- Parent Board is growing in number of volunteers and evolving.
- Have started enrolled student family get together cookouts over the summer, sponsored by the Parent Board. We are bringing families from the same areas of the state together so they can meet each other, swap information, form car pools and realize that the Parent Board is a resource and be more responsive when asked for money in the future.

Minority Alumni Network

Tony Gray

- Need to take Minority Alumni Network in a new direction.
- There has been a marketing problem with the network.
- When network was first established they really felt alone from the University and other alumni groups. Deon along with alumni association really pushed to become more a part of the University at large.
- Network has been very African American centered.
- Challenge is Tony's location. He would like to find a co-chair that is local and not African American.
- Ultimate goal is to make network more advantageous and accessible to all minority groups.
- Second goal is to gain a greater prominence at events. Drop in attendance is problem that needs to be overcome.
- Third goal is to increase giving circle that has been named for Monica Taylor, who passed shortly after Homecoming.
- Will be doing MAN picnic again this summer.
- Will be working to get Homecoming events solidified.
- Traditional Black History Month event may be replaced by a Latino event or something that is not African American centered.
- There needs to be other events that represent the greater minority community of IWU.
- Tony had a dinner set up by Roshaunda Ross with the minority student leadership on campus. The leadership on campus is very young. It was suggested at the dinner that the minority group do something similar to what the Council for Women does with their weekend summit.
- Overall the feeling on campus is positive.

Council of IWU Women

Molly Rollings and Elly Jones

- The weekend was successful
- Faculty Staff breakfast was a time to say thanks for all that they have done.
- New Careers and Coffee in the Dug Out was successful.
- Student lunches are where alumni take students off campus for lunch to discuss what ever they would like to.
- New this year was an event at State Farm put on by their women's networking group.
- Young Alumni Panel of 1-5 years gave an honest view of how it is.
- Table Rotations that represented all areas of State Farm.
- Dinner at Ann's house
- Mocktail School to teach students how to act at a cocktail party whether it be having to interact with faculty and staff for acceptance for graduate school or for a business party.
- Having event in March was a challenge with spring break. The event will be moved back to February.
- Better advertising needed so Council will be working with the Career Center and Darcy Greder.
- Elly and Molly will be formalizing how new members are approached and setting up time frames for chair positions.
- Will be putting into place a voting system for chair position.
- Will be polling students to find out what they liked about topics presented and what they would like to see in the future.
- Council members will be polled to see what type of programming they would like to have for themselves during the weekend.
- Possibly do a minority event in conjunction with the Council weekend.

Young Alumni Network

Trevor Sierra

- Chicago Cubs game is May 16. Two hundred tickets are purchased and the first forty are given to seniors who R.S.V.P. to the senior dinner.
- For the remaining one hundred sixty tickets a \$5.00 donation will be added into the price of the ticket.
- Justine is working on an event for Mclean County and Peoria young alumni. It will be a wine tasting at the Mackinaw Valley vineyard.
- An area for growth is learning how to program young alumni events in the smaller regions.
- Justine would like to move to having more programming and interaction with current students.

Trustees

Tracy Wych

- Very impressed with how caring and open the trustees are.
- There have been really difficult decisions that have had to be made pertaining to the pension and reduction in the medical contribution.
- Budget is a very real issue and there have been some tough cuts made to operating budget.

Regional Alumni Groups

Guy Gebhardt

- Gave out a hand-out including dates of upcoming events.
- Last conference call was last week in which coming events were discussed.
- Guy asked how current budget cuts were going to affect regional events. Ann answered that there have been things done so there doesn't have to be too much cut from regional events. One of the things is charging at more events, and including in the charge the 3% it costs to have alums pay over the internet.
- This year each region was assigned a budget, helping regional presidents be able to make decisions about how that money was going to be spent.

Newsletters

Brian Beam

- Met with Erika Olsen, the student worker who organizes and sends out newsletters.
- 30% of classes are represented and send out a newsletter.
- There is an opportunity for engagement and to bring on some new class editors.
- A template could be designed to give newsletters a similar look, upgrade the professionalism and to promote some other Wesleyan initiatives and to promote the brand a little better.
- Create some synergies with the magazine.
- Class newsletter should become more centrally written, edited and put together here on campus.
- Template will be voluntary to current editors.
- Put a link to class news on E Connection by class years.
- Brian will be sending out an email to engage new editors.
- Erika and Ann will be working to find a graphic designer to help with template.
- Shaye volunteered wife Sunny to help with graphics.
- There was discussion on affinity newsletters to reach out to more people.

Nomination Committee

Tracy Garrett

- The board by acclamation selected three alumni to be recipients of the following awards.
- Distinguished Alumni award will go to Ron Ford class of 1978.
- Outstanding Young Alumni award will go to Rod Adams class of 1995.
- Loyalty award will go to Jerry Philpott class of 1959.
- The board agreed to have Tracy Garrett put into writing the criteria and process for having alumni nominated for awards to be presented at next board meeting.

At-Large Members

Marsha Guenzler Stevens

- How to better use the talents and keep engaged the at-large members.
- Gary Ohler sent a letter to Marsha suggesting that the board provide some form for those not assigned to a committee to provide input and feel like they are contributing.
- Gary also suggests formalizing the on-boarding process.
- Gary also has a good idea of engaging international students.
- Current at-large members are all engaged and okay with their roles on the board.
- According to by-laws, at-large members are chosen to add diversity to the board whether it is ethnic or class year diversity.

New Ideas for Discussion

Jim Mullins asked board members to seek donations for the Ryan Beaupre 5K race. The committee is looking for eight donations in the amount of \$250.00 to sponsor the race t-shirt.

Guy asked regional presidents if they would be interested in volunteer training at Homecoming and they are not.

Nursing Anniversary brought back a lot of alums who had not been back before. How does the board capitalize on the momentum created by the nursing event?

- Barb Nathan who is an at-large member on this board is the chair of the nursing event so the board needs to ask her how keep momentum growing

Molly suggested we do something for the Brokaw Nursing alumni.

President Wilson has asked the Alumni Association to think about creating an award for faculty that would come by way of alumni nominators.

- Tracy and Sundeep will come up with some criteria to present to the board in the fall to see if this is something board wants to pursue.

Homecoming Events and Outreach

- Marsha asked everyone on the board to commit to reach out and bring ten people back to campus.
- Guy's phone call with regional groups resulted in the following suggestions:
 - Engage alums and students at the luncheon.
 - Greek Alumni table should be at luncheon.
 - Emails from students in a particular department to invite alums with corresponding majors back for Homecoming.
 - Scheduled events by department.
 - Involvement fair at the luncheon.
 - Have student volunteers more visible with buttons so alumni know they can approach the student volunteer with questions.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:24p.m.