

**Illinois State University Alumni Association Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes September 24, 2016  
Illinois State University Alumni Center**

**Members Present:** Kathy Bohn, Lisa Castleman, Ryan Gilbert, Jen Groezinger Wiebel, Michele Guadalupe, Dave Horstein, Maggie Im, Julie Jones, Jerry Kerber, MaryAnn Louderback, Joe McGuire, Kathy Murdoch, Bob Navarro, Tim Pantaleone, Scott Preston, Alicia Ramos, Doug Reeves, Kaci Rollings, Brian Sher, Steve Smith, Alice Spann, Ron Whitton, Mike Willis, Jerry Wright, Linda Yap

**Members Absent:** Jeff Charnogorsky, Bob Freitag, Daniel Lopez Jr., Ashley Mayor

**Alumni Staff Present:** Doris Groves, Ashley Pritts

**Guests Present:** University Advancement Vice President Pat Vickerman, Vice President of Student Affairs Levester (L.J.) Johnson, Career Center Director Pam Cooper, Career Center Associate Director Mike Minton

1. **Call to Order:** President Tim Pantaleone called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. He reminded board members that the meeting was being recorded. Pantaleone made a few announcements regarding board members' personal updates from the summer.
2. **University Update & Vice President's Remarks (Pat Vickerman):**
  - Unfortunately, due to the timing of returning from another event, President Larry Dietz is unable to attend. University Advancement Vice President Pat Vickerman will be providing the University updates.
  - Student enrollment is up for the third year in a row for a total of 21,039 students with the freshman class coming in at 3,638 (a 27 year high) with an average ACT of 24 (217 freshman scored over 30 and one had a perfect score of 36). The average GPA of our incoming freshman is 3.4, evidence of the high academic quality of the freshman class. There is also a more diverse enrollment this year with a 10% increase in African American students and 9% increase in Latino students.
  - The current graduation rate is 73%, and the retention rate is 82%. Both measurements are in the top 10% of the nation. ISU attracts and keeps great students, and this shows in the numbers.
  - There is an increased debt repay percentage for Illinois State University graduates, partially due to their lower overall debt. Students take advantage of many scholarship opportunities while on campus and are mindful of paying off their loans after accepting quality jobs.
  - Vickerman reminded the Board of President Dietz's Metrics of Excellence (formerly President's Dietz's Points of Pride), a collection of rankings, qualities, and values of the University. These Metrics of Excellence include being named 22<sup>nd</sup> in the nation by USA Today amongst universities who can boast being the best value for the money, being listed at #78 in US News & World Report rankings, and being recognized in seven categories as a great place to work by the Chronicle of Higher Education.
  - ISU has maintained low overall University debt (reducing spending by \$11 million campus wide) with no furloughs or layoffs (although about 100 non-faculty positions were either eliminated or left vacant after a staff departure). And even though there were no raises again this year, staff and faculty donations were up, and overall we saw \$21.6 million in gift commitments.

- UA Vice President Vickerman reminded the Board that the FY17 Fundraising goal is \$23 million. Campaign planning is still underway with the official “kickoff” event being planned for September 2017.
- Vickerman and Dietz recently joined Alumni Relations staff in Houston, Texas for a great event.
- Current University priorities and goals include student recruitment, especially in regards to the international student population’s enrollment growth, increasing diversity on campus, continuing to address campus climate awareness, and general housekeeping tasks such as completing the Provost and CAST Dean searches.

### **3. Trustee’s Remarks (MaryAnn Louderback):**

- Trustee Louderback kept her remarks brief, reminding the Board that the lack of state funding is still the major issue. Illinois State University did a great job pre-planning last year, so we continue to have funding to maintain our high standards.
- Louderback reminded the Board that presently only about 14% of the overall budget at ISU comes from the State of Illinois.
- She asked that board members, as representatives of the Alumni Association, please consider doing the following: speak out about the great education that you received at ISU, sell your story and the story of Illinois State University, contact (email, call, write) your state legislator’s office and voice your concerns of the lack of funding to higher education, and perhaps even set up a one-on-one meeting with your state legislator and personally convey your concerns of the lack of funding to higher education.

### **4. Special Presentation from Student Affairs Vice President (Levester Johnson):**

- Vice President Johnson introduced himself to the group and provided a little background on himself. As one of eight siblings, he grew up as a preacher’s son in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He completed his undergraduate degree at Marquette University and his Master’s degree at SIU Carbondale. He comes to us after 24 years of service on the leadership team at Butler University in Indianapolis and is glad to be here at ISU.
- Johnson spoke on reorganizing the Student Affairs division in order to attain higher function within the organization, synergy among like areas, increased stability in roles and efficiencies in operation and personnel, and to achieve a particular strategic direction.
- The Vice President’s primary mission is to impact “one student at a time.”
- To achieve these goals, Johnson and his Student Affairs staff must focus on their perspective, their practice, and their purpose. He remarked that it is cheaper to retain a current student rather than recruit a new one.
- Johnson’s areas of focus for new initiatives center around leadership development (committing support and specifically focusing on engaging the Greek system on campus), safety and care (specifically mentioning Title IX), engagement and discourse (creating a safe environment for open communication), diversity (promoting exchange and education regarding appreciation of the differences of all on campus), and adopting a housing master plan (specifically mentioning the possibility of adding pod style living).
- The Vice President remarked on the various volunteer opportunities within the Student Affairs division and challenged all ISU Alumni Association board members to volunteer and encourage other alumni to participate as well. Johnson directed board members to the many opportunities listed on the Student Affairs website including volunteer needs on the Greek Task Force, the Board of Fraternal Affairs, the Brain Drain Initiatives, the Student Affairs Advisory Board, and naturally in regards to the current fundraising Campaign.

- Board member Steve Smith asked about how the University monitors social media traffic in the parent groups on Facebook. Johnson answered that there are several staff members in the Dean of Students office that monitor posts in these groups and respond as necessary, but overall parents do a good job of self-policing Facebook groups. He asked that board members with children attending ISU respond as they see fit.
- Board member Mike Willis asked about Johnson's philosophy on Greek life on campus and its relation to the Panhellenic Council. Vice President Johnson shared his thoughts on the matter and how he thinks the local chapters can maintain their involvement. Willis offered his support and involvement if needed.
- Board member Alice Spann asked that Johnson take a look at the Redbird Ready program hosted by Admissions to reach out to incoming students from underrepresented populations to be sure we are doing the most we can to welcome those students.
- Board member Doug Reeves commented on his agreement with the University's support of open dialogue and free speech on campus. Johnson agreed that ISU will continue to promote an engaged campus for civil discourse and exchange while still maintaining the safety of students inside and outside of the classroom. He stressed the importance of educating students, faculty, and staff on their rights regarding free speech (i.e. displaying certain "offensive" symbols in student rooms is different than displaying them publicly).

#### **5. Special Presentation from Career Center Staff (Pam Cooper & Mike Minton):**

- Career Center staff Pam Cooper and Mike Minton spoke to the Board regarding their commitment to working with ISU alumni in regards to student career readiness.
- They explained the purpose of the Career Center and how they work with students on career development and career readiness. Once they work through career development with students, they try to teach students how to better connect with employers and interviewers for positions, and they also help to make connections between employers seeking Redbirds and students seeking career or internship opportunities. Cooper and Minton broke down the various definitions and core competencies of career readiness and specifically mentioned that employers are looking for the following in their job candidates: career management, critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, teamwork and collaboration, IT understanding and application, leadership abilities, and professionalism. They spoke of University wide efforts involving various committees in order to help determine and promote qualities that will help to make sure ISU students develop the skills needed to successfully transition to careers.
- Cooper and Minton spoke on possible alumni volunteer opportunities throughout the year. The Career Center wants to engage successful alumni and to have them share their experiences and explain the vital qualities that employers are searching for now. Generally, alumni will come and share the stories of their successful career paths and answer student questions.
- Improved record keeping has helped the Career Center to determine how many students are being served each year, where and how their services are being utilized, how many employers are recruiting on campus, how successful their messaging and outreach has been, where more attention is needed, and how successful their career fairs have been throughout the year.
- Cooper and Minton spoke on the increased need for transfer student specific and diversity programming within Career Center outreach.
- The speakers provided examples of collaborations between the Career Center and Alumni Relations throughout the year and the improved (and now free) career services provided for ISU alumni.

- Board member Alice Spann remarked at how she has noticed an improvement in the ISU students and alumni she has interviewed in her Human Resources experience and how glad she is to see the Career Center providing more expanded services for students and alumni alike.
- Board of Trustee representative MaryAnn Louderback asked when students should seek out support from the Career Center. Cooper remarked that freshman and sophomores should get engaged with the Career Center early, and they are now marketing programming specifically to these groups of students.
- Board member Doug Reeves who is quite involved with the Career Center, commented on the vast resources they provide students of all ages, whether they are seeking out internships or careers.
- Board member Julie Jones asked about employer resources available on the Career Center website, specifically in regards to interns. Cooper explained the Hire-a-Redbird web board on their website and how employers can utilize the service to seek out both interns and employees.
- Former Student Alumni Council President Brian Sher thanked Cooper and Minton for the support of the Career Center and commented that the services he utilized were very helpful.
- Board member Steve Smith asked what advice they can give to future and potential students regarding the career uncertainty that bubbles to the surface when students start college. Minton spoke on “just in time services” and the Career Center’s efforts toward career development.

#### **6. Approval of Minutes from the June 18, 2016 Meeting:**

- The motion to approve the minutes from the June 18, 2016 meeting was made by Jerry Wright and seconded by Doug Reeves. The motion was passed with unanimous consent and no discussion.

#### **7. President’s Report (Tim Pantaleone):**

- President Pantaleone reminded the Board that updated financial reports for FY16 and FY17 were submitted for review in the Board packet. Executive Director Doris Groves mentioned we saw an increase in the revenue received from the alumni insurance program this past fiscal year, and our expenses matched that increase. This increase is expected to stay the same for FY17.
- Pantaleone explained that the email addresses published on the Alumni Association Board of Directors website will no longer be the board members personal address, but will now be an ISU alias email that forwards to their personal email address.
- He commented on the recent tailgate before the Northwestern football game, mentioning that it was a great event with many ISU alumni in attendance. The football team’s win was a bonus!

#### **8. Executive Director’s Report (Doris Groves):**

- Executive Director Doris Groves distributed the most recent contact list for ISUAA board members to be updated. A new copy will be distributed at the next meeting.
- There are a few staffing updates from Alumni Relations. Interns Lisa DeWeert and Anastasia Kreiling have joined the staff, and graduate assistant Samantha Spellman just returned from a practicum in Boston.

- Groves provided some brief notes on recent events and activities hosted by the Alumni Relations office. The large event, A Normal Tradition in Chicago, was hosted at Navy Pier on June 22 with an attendance of about 250 even with the dismal weather. Overall the response was very positive. Groves passed around the “Find Reggie” sheets created by Arts Technology students for the Chicago event. The students used QR codes and YouTube videos to insert Reggie Redbird into various clips of spots around campus. The Cubs and White Sox games attendance was almost 350 in July, a great showing. A new event, Pottery in the Making, was a huge success and the extraordinary interest sparked a second date. In collaboration with the School of Art, guests had the opportunity to make their own mug and throw pottery on the wheel. The ISU vs. Northwestern tailgate attendance was over 250 and was a great prelude to a win for the Redbirds! Also, the Legacy Brunch during Family Weekend (September 18) was a huge success with 250 students and alumni in attendance. Most parents received a legacy t-shirt at Preview and Transfer days, and a legacy pin was given from parents to their legacy students at the brunch. This year, students also had the opportunity to purchase a “State your Legacy” stole to wear at graduation.
- Groves also highlighted some of the upcoming events and activities hosted by Alumni Relations, the most important being Homecoming 2016: A Normal Tradition from October 3-9. Another Cook with a Redbird Chef event (hosted in collaboration with the Family and Consumer Sciences Food Lab) is slated for November 4. A reception at the Coca-Cola headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia will be held on November 11. A new event, Alumni Sunday Fun Day is planned for December 4, and alumni are encouraged to bring children and grandchildren for the event taking place at the ISU Bowling and Billiards Center. Another new event for local alumni will be held on December 9 for the *It's A Wonderful Life* performance at the ISU School of Theatre and Dance with a reception prior to the play.
- Alumni affinity group development is still going strong. Sigma Nu, Alpha Phi Alpha, Hewett and Manchester halls, Alumni Marching Band, and the Chemistry department will be celebrating anniversaries or holding reunions during Homecoming week. Peoria, Phoenix, Dallas, and Champaign geographic networks all have fall events scheduled. And nine geographic networks will be participating in “Homecoming-To-Go”. The Black Colleagues Association will also be hosting their annual meeting on Saturday, December 9.
- Groves also updated the Board on the Legislative Advocacy projects that are moving forward on three different fronts. In August, an email was sent to alums (except ISU employees) encouraging them to contact their legislators. She and Alumni Relations staff member Colleen Rice are working with other state university advocacy representatives to help facilitate planned communication with alumni, maintenance of alumni data by legislative districts, and outreach opportunities.
- Groves also mentioned the possibility of starting an ISU Alumni Virtual Book Club. We are currently exploring the possibilities and opportunities available for the project and hope to launch the program in the Spring.

## **9. Continuing Business (Tim Pantaleone):**

- Doug Reeves provided an update on Board involvement during Homecoming week. A volunteer sign-up sheet was passed around and email follow ups will be sent. Campus Decorating judging will take place on September 30. The Alumni King and Queen, Parker and Sharon Lawlis are to be crowned at Alumni Day Luncheon on Friday, October 7. Executive Director Doris Groves announced that 79 alumni from various areas of campus will be honored at the Alumni Day Luncheon. The President’s Reception for board members will be hosted on Friday, October 7 from 5-7 p.m. at the University Residence. Board members participating in the tram decorating are to meet Friday, October 7 at 7 p.m. in the

shed behind the John Greene building. The Spread the Red alumni tailgate tent set up and decorating will begin at Saturday, October 8 at 7:30 a.m. Volunteers are still needed for manning the sign in tables, greeting alumni, taking Reggie Redbird photos, and clean up at the alumni tent. Those riding or walking in the parade will meet Saturday, October 8 at 9:30 in the parking lot of the Student Services Building for the 10 a.m. step-off. The football game begins at 2 p.m. at Hancock Stadium.

#### **10. New Business:**

- The new committee and liaison assignments were reviewed. Maggie Im would like to be put back on the RED committee. The motion to approve the assignments was made by Ryan Gilbert and was seconded by Scott Preston. The motion was passed with unanimous consent.
- President Pantaleone and Executive Director Groves announced that a new quarterly online survey of the Board Priority Action Items outcomes will be sent to board members and should be distributed sometime in the first quarter of the new calendar year. This will help to better capture volunteer service, involvement, and activities participated in by board members (as a whole) quarterly. A report of these survey results will be generated and reviewed by the Executive Committee.

#### **11. Committee/Liaison Updates:**

- Tim Pantaleone provided an update on behalf of the Awards committee. The committee has officially announced the 2017 ISU Alumni Association award recipients: Distinguished Alumni Award-Dave and Karen Magers, Senator John W. Maitland Jr. Commitment to Education Award-Al and Linda Bowman, E. Burton Mercier Alumni Service Award-Lynda Lane, Alumni Achievement Award-Ray Brownfield, and Outstanding Young Alumni Award-Rebecca Wenning Vieyra.
- Steve Smith provided an update on behalf of the Redbird Prime committee. Smith reported that the upcoming Half Century Club event is scheduled for April 28-29, 2017. The committee is also now meeting to plan and is reviewing their committee description and mission statement.
- Julie Jones provided an update on behalf of the Scholarship Committee. Jones reported that the deadline has been moved up in order to be more in line with Financial Aid's timeline, and so the recipients will receive notification of their scholarship awards on their official award letters at roughly the same time of other campus wide scholarships.
- Kathy Murdoch provided an update on behalf of the RED committee. Murdoch reported that they had had an unforeseeable technical difficulty with their bios project and hope to get back on track by the first of the year.
- Joe McGuire just assumed the responsibility of Athletics liaison, so he has nothing to report at this time. He is looking forward to working with this committee in the future.
- Linda Yap reported that she attended the recent luncheon for the Bone Scholars, and she looks forward to continuing to act as the liaison for that program.
- Kaci Rollings is the new representative to the Foundation Board. Although she has nothing to report at this time, there are a few upcoming meetings scheduled.
- Tim Pantaleone, as liaison for the Honorary Degree committee, stated that the process is just beginning stages, so there is nothing new to report at this time.

## **12. Director's Comments:**

- Dave Horstein announced that his wife, who had been diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma earlier this year, has now completed her chemotherapy and is officially in remission!
- The newly renovated McAlister's Deli in the Bone Student Center features a large mural showcasing several of our board members ringing the bell on the quad on Founder's Day in 2013. Board members featured in the photo are Bob Navarro, Michele Guadalupe, Jen Wiebel, Kaci Rollings, and Kathy Murdoch.
- Alicia Ramos provided a brief update on the Student Alumni Council, including their involvement in window painting for Homecoming and their opportunity to ring the victory bell at the football game.
- Mike Willis extended an invitation to rest of the Board to stop by the ISUBCA Homecoming events, especially the tailgate tent on Saturday and the BCA Scholarship Brunch on Sunday morning at The Chateau in Bloomington.
- Steve Smith encouraged all board members to informally tour the various Homecoming Tailgates on Saturday, October 8 to greet people and network on behalf of the Alumni Association.
- Doris Groves reminded the Board that the Latin@ Alumni Network will be hosting their Homecoming get together on the Saturday evening of Homecoming at Maggie Mileys. Anyone is welcome to stop by.

**13. Adjournment:** The motion to adjourn was presented by Jerry Wright with a second by Jen Wiebel. The meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.