

# Effective Alumni Engagement

Communicating with Your Alumni



# Alumni Engagement is Not.....

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1. Asking alumni for money
2. Asking alumni to party with you
3. Asking them to get you out of trouble
4. Having high expectations of alumni
  - Asking for a house
  - Asking for a job
5. Just about your chapter's alumni

# Alumni Relations Chair Tasks

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- Establish goals for the academic year based upon past programming accomplishments and the need for improvement.
- Partner with the chapter's alumni association on all mailings and e-mailings to the chapter's alumni members
- Help alumni association to update chapter's alumni database in conjunction with the Memorial Headquarters database. Provide graduating senior information to the AA.
- Assist alumni association in planning and coordinating alumni events throughout the year
- Ensure effective transition with proper documentation

# Different Types of Alumni Involvement

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## Alumni Association

- Assists in transition from undergraduate to alumnus membership
- ‘... Always a PIKE’
- Administers Scholarship Program
  - Chapter endowment funds set up through the Pi Kappa Alpha Foundation
- Talent pool for HC members and AAB members
- Alumni networking
- Hosts alumni events throughout the year

# Different Types of Alumni Involvement

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## House Corporation

- Develops and enacts a long term housing strategies
- Directs the purchase, sale, and leasing of real estate
- Builds reserves and raises funds for future projects
- Oversees maintenance, capital improvements, and potential renovation of chapter facility

# Different Types of Alumni Involvement

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## Alumni Advisory Boards

- Professional expertise and support to the chapter
- Commitment to helping the chapter improve
- Counsel and advice to chapter leadership
- Assistance in the areas of academics, leadership, recruitment and financial management
- Emphasis on the intangible aspects of fraternalism
  - Ritual, brotherhood, motivation, unity & caring for one another
- Up-to-date progress on new ideas, tools and fraternal programs

# Different Types of Alumni Involvement

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# Four Areas of Alumni Engagement

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1. Identify

2. Communicate

3. Cultivate

4. Solicit



# 1. Identify

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## Alumni Database

- Establish and maintain an alumni database:
  - Contact MHQ to obtain a detailed list of alumni (in the area, from the chapter, etc.)
  - Contact local area/chapter alumni association(s) to obtain records
  - Utilize and combine both lists to be more thorough
    - Chapter, AA & MHQ lists should be coordinated

# 1. Identify (cont.)

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## Finding your alumni

- *myPIKE*
  - On your new websites
  - Universal solution
- Letters
  - Ask for updates
  - Insert sections of lost alumni
- Events
  - Sign in sheets
- Social Media
  - Post the link to *myPIKE*
  - Social website campaigns
- University Records

## 2. Communicate

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### Contacting Alumni

- Communication with alumni
  - Be thorough and personal
  - Use a variety of means of contacting alumni: E-mail, phone, mailings
  - Send personal invitations to events, include RSVPs, and utilize 'thank you' notes for those who attended events or donated
  - Utilize newsletters, websites, social media

## 2. Communicate (cont.)

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### Newsletters

- The main publication is the Alumni Newsletter.

#### Rules of thumb:

- Send out ***at least*** 2 times per year  
(consistency is key!)
- Follow the 80/20 rule (80% alumni news, 20% chapter news)
- Use paper and electronic mailings (budget)
- Find a template that works for you and will be aesthetically pleasing to those that read the publication (your chapter's brand)

## 2. Communicate (cont.)

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### Newsletters

- In formatting and preparing a newsletter, include the following:
  - Alumni updates (weddings, new jobs, births, etc.)
  - Alumni event summary/recap
  - Pictures (from events or to accompany any article)
  - Upcoming event announcements (local alumni events, alumni association events, university events etc.)
  - Lost alumni list
  - Chapter update
  - Information update form (address, e-mail, etc)
  - Donor/gift acknowledgement
  - Rush recommendation sheet
  - University updates

## 2. Communicate (cont.)

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### Social Media

- Utilize Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn
  - Use your chapter's Facebook group to reach out to the alumni
    - Encourage outgoing seniors to join
    - Attach the link of the Facebook group to each letter you send out
    - Have a schedule set to post updates
    - Make the posts 'alumni appealing'
      - Upload old pictures
      - Updates on chapter events
      - Chapter awards, rush numbers

# 3. Cultivate

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## Alumni Events

- Plan well in advance – Give alumni as much notice as possible! They have work, families, and other obligations
- Coordinate with the local area/chapter alumni association—They can provide additional help and resources for events
- Have a plan for when alumni ‘show up’ to the PIKE house & educate all members
- It is not the **quantity** of events, but rather the **quality** of events

## 3. Cultivate (cont.)

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### Alumni Events

- Coordinate chapter calendar with university calendar
- Set a date at least 6 months in advance (Saturdays are best)
- Send invitations with all pertinent information at least 2 months prior to an event (include an RSVP form)
- Advertise the event using multiple mediums (newsletter, website, invitation, phone-a-thon, social media, etc.)
- Utilize sign-in tables for updating contact information and the Lost Alumni list
- If you have a chapter house, make sure it is **CLEAN**
  - *This is alumni recruitment, you have one shot!*



## 3. Cultivate (cont.)

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### Alumni Events

- In following up after events, basic rules apply:
  - Send 'thank you' notes to speakers and guests
  - Complete an event summary and prepare all documentation used in planning and executing the event (Y.E.S.)
  - Write an article for the next alumni newsletter and the *Shield & Diamond*
  - Update the alumni database with new information obtained at the event

## 4. Solicit

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### Why Communicate with Your Alumni?

***It's about connecting with your alumni and keeping them involved!!!***

- As a chapter, your role is to execute steps 1 – 3.
  - Alumni will start to give their time when they see the chapter is actively engaging them.
    - Building your alumni entities
- Once the alumni are engaged there are opportunities for raising money.
  - *Alumni build houses, alumni raise money, alumni advise leadership*



# Question & Answer

Thank You!