Purpose of an Alumni Chapter

The purpose of the local chapter is to organize graduates and former students that reside in a particular community into a unified body affiliated with Fort Valley State University as a vehicle through which worthwhile and beneficial goals are executed. Local chapters are most important in the promotion of the interests and needs of the university.

An alumni chapter is a coordinating force between the university, its graduates, its students, and a particular local community. It is a cohesive element, a vital link bringing all together.

A great and continuing need at FVSU is for alumni to organize alumni chapters and become involved in supporting the university. An alumni chapter may establish several specific objectives such as:

1. To promote the goals and objectives of the University and the National Alumni Association, Inc.
2. To assist the Executive Director of the National Alumni Association, Inc. (EDAA) in locating alumni and keeping their names and addresses current;
3. To recruit and encourage promising students to attend FVSU;
4. To support the Alumni Annual Fund Raising Programs;
5. To motivate interest and attendance at special occasions such as Homecoming, Founders’ Day, Alumni Weekend, Commencement, etc.;
6. To keep the alumni informed of University programs, progress, concerns, and issues through regular meetings;
7. To invite the EDAA and national alumni president to speak to the local chapter;
8. To increase its membership by soliciting presently inactive alumni or new alumni moving into the local chapter area;
9. To provide scholarships, grants and/or loans for students in local chapter areas;
10. To have as much representation as possible at national alumni meetings; and
11. To sponsor a concert by the University Choir or Band and other student groups for fundraising and recruitment purposes.

As the individual chapters progress, other objectives may be developed depending on local talent, interest, and needs.

Chapter Responsibilities

- It is mandatory for each chapter to have at least one representative in attendance at each national conference/meeting. It is important for each chapter to give input as the Association sets goals and develops programs.
- All moneys raised by the chapters of the FVSU National Alumni Association, Inc. or by individuals serving as representatives of the Association must transfer those funds through the Executive Director of Alumni Affairs office. They may be submitted as restricted funds for scholarships or to selected departments or programs at the University. It is mandatory that his procedure is followed. This has been in effect since November 2, 1989.
• No chapter will be allowed to maintain more than $2,000.00 in their bank accounts at the end of the fiscal year (June 30) unless given prior approval by the National Board of Directors. All funds raised during the fiscal year must be disbursed for the purpose that they were raised. All requests to maintain bank balances greater than $2,000.00 must be submitted in writing by May 30 of each year.

• A budget for each chapter must be submitted to the Executive Director of Alumni Affairs Office by March 15 of each year.

• Copies of the previous year’s meeting minutes and an account of the chapter’s financial activities must be submitted to the Career and Alumni Services Office by January 5 of each year.

• The FVSU National Alumni Association, Inc. charters each chapter and any questions regarding policy or actions of the University’s Administration, Faculty, Staff must be channeled through the National Alumni Affairs Office. Individuals are free to make inquiries on their own.

• National membership dues and chapter assessments are due by April 1 of each year. An individual cannot be considered an active member of a local chapter if National dues are not current.

• Chapters are prohibited from participating in partisan politics or supporting political candidates. Failure to comply will result in automatic revocation of the chapter’s charter.

• Chapters are required to participate in and support all National programs and projects.

  • The Executive Director of Alumni Affairs must be notified in writing of all chapter projects and programs. This can be accomplished by submitting an outline of the chapter’s annual programs with the budget at the start of the calendar year.

### Steps in Organizing a Chapter

When there is interest in organizing or revitalizing a local alumni chapter, the interested person(s) should contact the Executive Director of Alumni Affairs for guidance and copy the National Alumni President. Subsequently, assemble interested alumni for planning an organizational meeting per guidance.

From time to time, the EDAA will contact alumni in certain geographical areas in the interest of establishing a local chapter. Whether the motivation originates from a group of alumni or from the University, the EDAA is available and eager to provide assistance.

**College Assistance**

When a group of five or more Alumni wish to organize or revitalize an alumni chapter, the EDAA will:

- Provide a list of names and addresses of all known alumni in the area;
- Provide copies of the handbook, with a recommended sample constitution and helpful program suggestions;
- Provide any other necessary information which the group feels will be beneficial in the initial stages; and
- Assist with the organizational meeting if desired.

**Instructions to the Local Area Alumni**

The Office of Alumni Affairs recommends to the group wishing to organize or reactivate a chapter that it proceeds to:

1. Set up a planning committee
2. Hold an organizational meeting
3. Report results and provide a written report of progress to the Alumni President outlining a plan of support for twelve months

The Planning Meeting

Arrange a meeting of several interested alumni, to serve as a steering committee, at which time the following steps should be taken:

1. Elect a temporary chairperson to preside until regular chapter officers are elected;
2. Decide upon a date, location, and time for the organizational meeting to which all alumni in the community should be invited. The meeting of the Steering Committee might also be the initial organizational meeting. The alumni executive director may attend if desired; and
3. The temporary chairperson should appoint:
   a. a nominating committee to prepare a slate of officers to be presented at the organizational meeting;
   b. a bylaws committee to prepare a basic form of organization for the chapter.

NOTE: The bylaws of the local chapter shall reinforce the constitution and bylaws of the National Alumni Association, Inc.

The Organization Meeting

1. Review briefly the purposes of an alumni chapter;
2. Introduce the chairperson of the temporary nominating committee and hear the committee’s report. After the slate has been presented others present should be allowed to nominate candidates if they desire;
3. Elect officers;
4. Present the constitution prepared by the committee and vote on its approval;
5. Obtain names of persons willing to serve on other committees;
6. Discuss chapter budget;
7. Decide on date, location, and time for the next meeting;
8. Allow sufficient time for fellowship period; refreshments may be served; and
9. Proceed now as an organized chapter.

Reporting

1. Submit a report of the meeting to the EDAA and to the National President. Include the:
   a. Names of the officers
   b. Membership roster.
   c. A copy of the adopted constitution.
2. Give coverage of the proceedings to the local newspaper.

ELECTED OFFICERS

As elected officers, the effectiveness and the successfulness of the chapter’s operation depend on you. The alumni have placed confidence in you to provide leadership and guidance. Good leadership must be displayed if the program of the Chapter is to be beneficial to both alumni and the university.

Several duties of the chapter officers are listed below:

President:
1. Presides at all chapter and executive committee meetings;
2. Is an ex-officio member of all committees;
3. Assumes ultimate responsibility for the success of all activities and projects the chapter undertakes;
4. Represents the university on particular occasions within the local community;
5. Complies promptly with requests from the Office of Alumni Affairs for information about the chapter; and
6. Discovers and cultivates new leadership for roles within the chapter.

Vice-President:
1. Performs the duties of the President in his/her absence; and
2. Executes any assignments given him by the President.

Secretary:
1. Takes the minutes of Chapter and Executive meetings;
2. Records and compiles all reports submitted by committees or individuals;
3. Sends to the Office of Alumni Affairs the names of elected officers;
4. Sends to the Office of Alumni Affairs any newsworthy events concerning alumni in the area or any special activities the chapter has undertaken;
5. Sends out notices for all chapter and committee meetings;
6. Sends out announcements of special chapter events;
7. Maintains the chapter roster;
8. Keeps the Office of Alumni Affairs informed of any names/address changes; and
9. Assists the membership committee in the Annual Drive.

Treasurer:
1. Collects and maintains the chapter funds; writes all checks for the financial obligations of the chapter; and keeps a record of all financial transactions;
2. Coordinates distribution of membership cards with the corresponding secretary upon receipt of annual dues; and
3. Gives a complete written financial statement to the entire membership periodically.
4. Sends yearend financial statements to the OAA.

Other officers may be added such as: Chaplain, Parliamentarian and Sergeant-at-Arms.

MEETINGS

How Often Shall You Meet: It is recommended that you meet at least once a month. Your frequency of meetings will be determined by the chapter’s program.

Where to Meet: Investigate several possibilities and select a site that is centrally located or will attract attendance. Vary the location of your meeting for major special events.

Planning the Meeting:
- Prepare and send out attractive meeting notices;
- Prepare an agenda for each meeting;
- Have a roll book for members to sign as they enter the meeting;
- Prepare a time schedule for each part of the program;
- Try to hold the business part of the meeting no longer than one hour and a half;
- Be sure to introduce new members or those attending for the first time; and
- Do not permit prolonged discussions on issues that a committee can handle.

Usual Meeting Agenda:
- Call to Order; Invocation;
- Reading of Minutes of the Last Meeting;
- Reading of Correspondence;
- Treasurer’s Report;
- Committees Report (list them);
• Unfinished Business; New Business;
• Recognition of New Alumni;
• Adjournment; and
• Social Hour (optional).

COMMITTEES

The Alumni Chapter should have various standing committees. The usual standing committees are:
• student recruitment,
• membership,
• program,
• fund raising; and
• publicity and constitution.

From time to time there will also be a need for temporary committees with single assignments. The types of committees will be determined by the purposes and scope of the distribution of workload, but will provide the opportunity for alumni to work together and contribute to the success of the organization.

4 Important Standing Committees/Responsibilities:

Student Recruitment
1. Develop plans for the chapter to assist the university in its recruitment efforts.
2. Conduct at least two student recruitment activities annually.
3. Maintain a minimum of 10 student recruitment packets for the chapter recruitment efforts
4. Promote FVSU throughout the chapter’s service area.

Membership Committee
1. Conducts annual membership drive
2. Contacts alumni moving into the area and informs them of the chapter’s activities and solicits their involvement. The Executive Director of Alumni Affairs notifies the chapter secretary of alumni moving into the area or vice versa.
3. Assists the corresponding secretary in keeping an up-to-date list of active members and address changes; and
4. Organizes a telephone committee to contact members about meeting and activities as a follow-up to written notices and publicity.

Program Planning Committee
1. This committee shares the responsibility with the Executive Committee for planning the annual program;
2. It is responsible for arranging the entertainment and providing for all necessary supportive materials, facilities and equipment;
3. It selects, when the occasion demands, program speakers, toastmasters, master of ceremonies, etc.;
4. Provides a location on the program agenda for the introduction of new members, and;
5. If there is not a special Hospitality Committee, the Program Committee designates some members of the committee to serve as hosts and hostesses at each meeting. The hosts and hostesses should make everyone feel welcome and feel a part of the organization.

Fund Raising Committee
This committee is charged with the responsibility for the fund raising activities toward the Chapter’s contribution to the university. This Committee should work closely with the program committee on fund raising projects.

Publicity Committee
1. Establishes a working relationship with the local and state news media (newspaper, television, radio, etc.);
2. Arranges for publicity prior to and following chapter meetings and special events;
3. Arranges for pictures to be taken in advance and during the chapter's activities;
4. Sends pictures and information on chapter activities to the Alumni Office for publication in the Newsletter;
5. Publicizes not only the chapter activities, but achievements or honors won by alumni; and
6. Utilizes every possible opportunity to promote a general interest in Fort Valley State University in the local newspaper or on radio and television.

**FUND RAISING SUGGESTIONS**

- Dances
- Concerts (University Choir or Band, etc.)
- Sales (Barbecue, Dinner, Bake)
- Banquet or Luncheon with Guest Speaker
- Golf Tournaments
- Boat Rides
- Benefit Raffles
- Fashion Shows
- Carnivals
- Plays or Pageants
- Movies
- Picnic
- Tours (Bus or Plane)
- Insurance Plan

**FUND RAISING INFORMATION**

**Why Special Events Fund Raising**

- It gives supporters something for their money
- It is a method of soliciting financial support for Fort Valley State University
- It builds new relationships
- It increases public awareness
- It exposes potential students to alumni role models
- It is a fun way to remain committed to your alma

The EDAA stands ready to assist you in the planning and execution of your fun-filled profitable special event.

**Special Events Fund Raising Guidelines**

One of the main objectives of the alumni chapter is to generate $M dollars for FVSU. Special Events fundraising is one way to achieve this objective.

The steps outlined below are excellent planning processes to ensure a successful special event.

- Decide on the type of special event you want to sponsor
- Determine the financial goal and the cost necessary to achieve the goal. Be realistic. Example: The financial goal is to net $2000. The cost to raise that amount is $500. A gross profit of $2500 is needed to reach the goal. Goal + Cost of Event = Amount that must be raised to reach the established goal.
- Prepare a detailed Budget for the event by calculating projected income and expenditures. Be sure to include all items and services that you may obtain at no cost. (e.g. gifts in-kind)
Identify all available financial resources. In some cases it may be appropriate to seek sponsorships from local businesses and the community (e.g. community volunteers and civic leaders).

- Identify and analyze human resources needed to make the event successful. You may have to look beyond your immediate group to fill the need.
- Identify your market. Know who will support your efforts and why. Prizes, door prizes, etc. may be used as incentives to increase involvement.
- Knowing your targeted market will help in determining how much to charge for the event and/or tickets.
- Timing. Allow yourself enough time to plan and develop the project. Also, be aware of other competitive community events, the economy, etc.
- When planning special events you may want to consider the seasons (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer, Holiday Celebrations, etc.) which could help create an event theme.
- Frequency of Event. Decide how often the event should be repeated. It may be planned annually, every two years or it may be an ongoing event such as the sale of FVSU paraphernalia, (e.g. T-shirts, logo watches, cups, caps, etc.).

Suggested Special Events

Special events may be formal or informal, limited to members, and/or open to the public. It is a good idea to plan events around a theme and have all aspects of the event related to the theme.

GALA BALLS – Generate big dollars if the chairperson is a highly recognized community or civic leader and committed to the cause.
- A very formal event requires a formal invitation, reservation cards and return envelopes. These should be mailed at least one month prior to the event.
- MASQUERADE BALLS are festive dances to which people wear masks and fancy costumes.
- SWEETHEART OR VALENTINE BALL is planned around Valentine’s Day and the usual bright red and white colors are worn.
- NOTE: The ratio of responses to an invitational ball is usually 1 to 5. You would need to send out 500 invitations to get 100 persons to attend the event.

EXTRAVAGANZAS – Can be very successful because they are designed “to see and be seen” with the right crowd and they usually attract a large number of guests.
- Benefit Concerts
- Sporting Events

BOWL-A-THONS – Have the potential of a high financial return. A broad base of involvement is necessary. Bowl-a-thons are fun-filled, action packed and, if planned correctly, provide a wide range of public relations and media coverage, as well as generate immediate dollars.

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT - Team Registration fees, Corporate sponsorships, Merchants Sponsorships, etc. all generate funds for Scholarship opportunities

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS – Most can be successful and profitable. They provide people an opportunity to learn and grow educationally.
- Prominent speakers
- Seminars/workshops/clinics

BARGAIN HUNTERS – With today's high cost of living, people are looking for bargains. You might consider a garage, rummage or bake sale.

FOOD FAIR FESTIVALS – Can be exciting - people enjoy sampling a variety of foods.
- Men and Women Who Cook
- Seafood festival
- Goombay Festival
- Calendar Tea
OTHER EVENTS – Banquets, brunches, breakfasts, luncheons, roasts, toasts, golf tournament, etc. The special events listed here are only a sample of the many activities your chapter may coordinate. The ideas presented are to encourage chapters to utilize a variety of special events in order to raise financial support for Fort Valley State University. If you identify other events that work well for you, send the details to the Alumni office.

The Executive Director of Alumni Affairs is available to provide professional and technical service and specifics on “How To…” for your special events. Once the project, goal and budget have been determined, complete the Special Events Report Form and submit it to the EDAA to take advantage of the professional and technical support available.