ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Proposed by:
Wendy Gehring
Hodges University Alumni Association 5 Year Strategic Plan

Introduction

An Alumni Association is an organization that represents the achievement of a university’s mission and goals. An Alumni Association is a partner to the university, its students, and the community and has the potential to serve as a resource for advancement of the University, support and mentoring of students and for the professional development of its members. Alumni relationships with the alma mater should be lifelong relationships of mutual support and growth. With committed, positive leadership and University support the Hodges Alumni Association can accomplish this and much more!

Purpose of the Strategic Plan

The purpose of this plan is to create and implement a meaningful set of strategic goals to promote and support the Alumni Association and build lasting relationships with the University, its alumni, students and friends.

Vision of the Strategic Plan

Hodges University Alumni Association will become a worthwhile “Must Participate” organization for graduates. The Alumni Association will become an integral and highly visible member of the Hodges community as well as a strategic partner in support of University mission, vision, and goals.

Mission of the Hodges University Alumni Association

The Mission of the Alumni Association is to support Hodges University, and to maintain the network of professional and social connections established as students in pursuit of lifelong learning.

9 Strategic Goals

This strategic plan concentrates on the following goals:

1. **Awareness** – to increase awareness of and membership in the Alumni Association through marketing, contact, and collaboration with alumni, students, the community and other University groups
2. **Value** – to offer valuable programs to promote lifelong relationships with alumni and position ourselves as a “Must Participate” organization
3. **Engagement** – to increase engagement so that the Alumni Association and the University will benefit from the diverse interests, talents, and backgrounds of our students and alumni
4. **Family** – to nurture the bonds that connect the Hodges family while re-connecting alumni and their families to the University and each other
5. **Support Structure** – promote the development of an Alumni Affairs Office with a Director, staff and budget to continue the mission of the Alumni Association in perpetuity. To develop an Alumni Association structure, Board and by-laws.
6. **Growth** – to promote significant growth in membership through creating and nurturing partnerships and alliances inside and outside the University

7. **Community Service** – to encourage alumni to share their knowledge, talents, and resources with the community

8. **Professional Development** – to create a Professional Development program that will benefit alumni and students in their career goals

9. **Advancement** – to position the HU Alumni Association to advance the University

**Action Plan**

**Goal One: Awareness**

*Increased awareness of and membership in the Alumni Association through marketing, contact, and collaboration with alumni, students, the community and other University groups.*

An Alumni Association should first and foremost maintain contact with their alumni. Two key action items will facilitate increased awareness and communication; 1) a communication/marketing plan that includes various points of contact throughout the life of students as well key points of contact with graduates and potential graduates, 2) alumni involvement, sponsorship, and participation in University events.

1) A Communication/Marketing Plan will include:

- A campaign to gather accurate alumni email and home addresses
- Alumni newsletters delivered in various formats (paper, email, mobile app, RSS, etc.)
- A plan to promote the Association through consistent, high quality visual and digital communications as well as event participation.
- Budget estimates
- A branding campaign
- A campaign to increase student awareness
- Alumni Association Student Committee to facilitate ideas and communication
- A plan to strengthen outreach and engagement efforts toward graduating students. For instance, a Future Alumni Orientation and a post graduation Alumni Welcome Kit.
- Full utilization of alumni.hodges.edu

2) Alumni participation and involvement in Hodges events will be encouraged through:

- Alumni event discounts
- Alumni Association Volunteer Committee to facilitate ideas and involvement
- Published networking opportunities
- Alumni recognition
Goal Two: Value
Offer valuable programs to promote lifelong relationships with alumni and position ourselves as a worthwhile “Must Participate” organization.

An Alumni Association should offer programs and opportunities that represent a valuable contribution to lifelong learning and development. Hodges alumni are people with adult responsibilities and concerns. Alumni Association programs should cater to these needs. To develop program offerings that are valuable to our alumni we can:

- Determine what we already offer and how we can build upon these offerings within our existing infrastructure and programs.
- Promote increased visibility of existing offerings (CARE, etc.)
- Enhance and expand the features of our existing online community
- Extend email account availability for life
- Develop an HU mobile application for event/news updates
- Build and expand member benefits like local business discounts (alumni ID card?)
- CLL program discounts
- Faculty/alumni blogs (current events, industry updates from an expert pool of alumni, etc.)
- Continue to support career services for alumni

Goal Three: Community Service
Encouraging alumni to share their knowledge, talents, and resources with the community.

An Alumni Association in partnership with the alma mater should give back to their community and be a strong community partner. This benefits the University as well as awareness and value of the organization. In order to establish a community presence the association can:

- Strengthen the roles alumni play in established Hodges community events
- Establish plan/timeline for ongoing community volunteerism opportunities
- “30 Deeds in 30 Days”
- National events that bring alumni together on the same day from different locations for the same cause (example: synchronized walks with alumni across the country)

Goal Four: Family
Nurture the bonds that connect the Hodges family while re-connecting alumni and their families to the University and each other.

An Alumni Association has the potential to make lasting connections to not only its alumni, but their families. Knowing someone’s family is important to making a lasting connection. That connection can often translate into current and future prospective students. To engage our extended families we can:

- Make a concerted effort to host events that INCLUDE alumni families (example: Family Fun Day)
- Develop “Children of Alumni” scholarship opportunities
- Spotlight personal events like births, marriages, etc.
• Sponsor “Hodges Alumni Family Nights” for local events (example: hockey games)
• Sponsor an alumni open house – tour of new facilities and luncheon
• Spotlight stories involving alumni and their children or other family members that have attended Hodges University
• Consider alumni inclusion when planning Hodges events

Goal Five: Engagement
Increase engagement so that the Alumni Association and the University will benefit from the diverse interests, talents, and backgrounds of our members.

A successful Alumni Association not only communicates to its members effectively and frequently but also engages those members in the enrichment of the Association and its university. The following items are examples of areas for alumni engagement:

• Annual alumni event schedule
• Frequent alumni communications with call to action
• Student mentoring opportunities
• Bring your student to work day
• Internship opportunities for students with alumni
• Stream, record and post Hodges events for alumni
• Alumni orientation program
• Campus events open to and marketed to alumni
• Volunteer opportunities at University events
• Community volunteerism (see goal 4)
• Where are they now spotlights
• Annual surveys
• Alumni Association student scholarship plan
• Alumni recognition program
• Alumni achievement section of the alumni website

Goal Six: Growth
Promote significant growth in membership.

Part of any Alumni Association goals is growth. Increasing membership numbers directly affects the ability of the Association to effectively reach its other stated goals. In order to increase membership in the Association all goals must be effectively managed but a specific growth strategy must also exist. The following can be elements of that strategy:

• Set annual membership goal and retention goals and develop plans to reach those goals
• Lost members outreach to existing members
• Specific ongoing program offerings geared toward increasing membership
• Contact points with existing students, potential graduates and graduates
• Continuing plans to add value to alumni programs
• Ongoing support of previous goals

Goal Eight: Support Structure
Promote the development of an Alumni Affairs Office with a Director, staff and budget to continue the mission of the Alumni Association in perpetuity. Develop an association structure, Board and by-laws.

A successful Alumni Association is backed by the full support of its alma mater. University administration, staff, and faculty must support the association not only with time but with organizational structure and finance. A clear Association structure supports a clearly identified Board and by-laws and helps the organization focus on its goals. The following items are critical to success:

• Development of Alumni Affairs Office with Director, staff, and budget
• Ensure the Alumni Affairs Office staffing structure and resources are well aligned with the long-range goals of the University
• Development of Association Board structure
• Development of Association committee structure
• Development of Association by-laws
• Election of Board members
• Solicit volunteers for committee membership
• Development of internal HU committee to support Association awareness, marketing, development, inclusion, etc. in conjunction with the Association Advisor(s) and President

Goal Nine: Advancement
Position the HU Alumni Association to advance the University.

With increased engagement, awareness, growth and accomplishment of prior goals, the Association will position itself over the next 5 years as a resource for the development and identification of donors and contributions.

Next Steps

The 9 goals established in this plan require a commitment from the University. This commitment involves, time, finance, leadership and across the board buy-in. But the University can’t do it without our alumni. We must begin with a membership drive, the launch of our alumni social network, and selected “kick off” events to build the momentum that will carry us through the next five years and into a position to fully realize the benefits of an active and successful Alumni Association.

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