Creating Tradition with a Vision
Campbell University School of Pharmacy Alumni Association
Strategic Planning Guide (2009-2014)

Introduction

The Campbell University School of Pharmacy (CUSOP) Alumni Association membership offers an immeasurable pool of talent and resources. However, active participation in the life of CUSOP is low.

The CUSOP Alumni Association wants to assess, correct and initiate its contact with alumni and invigorate alumni involvement with the university.

The assessment is that a majority of alumni no longer identify with their class nor do they look to their alma mater just for nostalgic connections.

Needs Assessment

To better understand alumni, the Board of Directors developed a survey to collect data on alumni interests and needs. Responses to an Alumni Assessment Tool, showed:

1) Pharmacy alumni who have not participated in association-coordinated events do not find the current organizations programs and activities appealing.

2) Alumni prefer to participate in activities where they live.

3) The majority of alumni are willing to contribute monetarily to CUSOP.

4) Communication about CUSOP and providing continuing education are viewed as important roles of the association.

The assessment results helped in the development of a strategic plan for the Pharmacy Alumni Association and should strive to answer two critical and interrelated questions:

1) What can the Pharmacy Alumni Association do to serve its alumni constituency?

2) What can pharmacy alumni do to make the university a better place?

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

1. Membership at 23% even as a young organization.
2. Confidence in the leadership of the Office of Alumni Relations.
3. Excellent support and cooperation from CUSOP including the dean.
4. The ability to capitalize on CUSOP academic reputation.
5. A staff that is passionate, enthusiastic, professional, and hard working.
6. Achievements such as the Betty Wallace Student Commons area.
7. The passion and dedication of our Board of Directors.
8. Creative use of resources that enabled the association to move forward rather than maintain the status quo.
9. Religious affiliation support.
10. Success of annual events and yearly continuing education program.
11. Small class sizes of early classes promoted bonding.

Weaknesses

1. A relatively low rate of participation of alumni volunteers, limiting our ability to accomplish more goals.
2. Limited resources to move the organization forward quickly.
3. Potential hindrance of issues related to religious affiliation.
4. The over commitment and time restraints of our Board of Directors to gain more traction on deliverables.
5. Alumni’s lack of knowledge regarding the roles of the Alumni Board of Directors and opportunities to volunteer with the association.
6. Skeptical alumni who have debt from school loans and feel they already have paid their contributions to CUSOP and just want freebies.
7. Relative lack of participation at Alumni Weekend.
8. Foundation of planning process
9. Low campus interest
10. Private school syndrome

Opportunities

1. Opportunity to engage P1-P4 students while they are on campus to help build tradition.
2. Alumni outreach program that will enable us to seek input from alumni and promote the organization.
3. Established website and other communication tools (Campbell Comments).
4. Small target audience for alumni association.
5. Large female demographic, with nearly 70% being female, creating a need for outreach to pharmacy alumni and their interests, specifically family-related.
6. Maddox Hall and other changes on campus may build curiosity and commitment of previously uninvolved alumni.
7. CU football team and new convocation center may create a venue for family activity.
8. Utilization of fraternities and student organizations to promote involvement.
9. Creating additional value added benefits for members.
10. Build on relationships with campus departments (athletics, admissions, CE, PR, etc).
11. Increase in continuing education hour requirement for NC may increase interest in CE opportunities.
12. Partnership programs with affinity organizations
13. Role modeling on campus

Threats

1. Geographical location of alumni prohibits planning of activities that include everyone.
2. An increasingly larger class size and alumni body resulting in a lack of common CUSOP experiences.
3. Resources of CUSOP are currently needed for funding of Maddox Hall creating the need for the Pharmacy Alumni Association to create its own resources.
4. Increase in the number of alumni that have degrees from other larger institutions in the area and thus feel a closer connection to support those institutions versus CUSOP.
5. Bias of alumni based on staff/faculty dislikes and negative attitudes of the school.
6. Sports
7. Lack of future “trench pharmacists”
8. Lack of focus by students on future

Mission Statement
To promote the interests of the Campbell University School of Pharmacy alumni and to foster a permanent affiliation while promoting fellowship among pharmacists who attended Campbell University School of Pharmacy.

Vision Statement
The vision of Campbell University School of Pharmacy Alumni Association is to create a self-supporting program whose foundations are based on establishing traditions and maintaining relationships that contribute toward the future growth and participation of the pharmacy alumni and their association.

Strategic Goals and Objectives for the CUSOP Alumni Association FY 2009 – 2014

Goal #1: To develop programs and events that meets the needs and interests of a diverse alumni population

Strategy: Develop programs of interest to alumni

Tactics:
- Offer at least five various Alumni Association sponsored events per year to reach different areas of interest (i.e. socials functions, family friendly events, CE symposiums and an activity that appeals specifically to the female demographic)
- Complete periodic and systematic surveys annually, including surveys that focus on “needs assessments” and “alumni satisfaction” to gauge how well the association is doing.
- Offer regional events to bring alumni together where they currently live and practice.
- Offer events including both alumni and current students in order to encourage involvement and future growth within the association.

Strategy: Develop programs of interest to female alumni demographic

Tactics:
- Hold a Ladies Luncheon/Weekend
- Plan more family focused activities (i.e. zoo visit, game watches on campus)
- Host a CE program discussing female related topics possibly during Breast Cancer Awareness month in October or during the Heart Disease campaign in February
Strategy: Offer Continuing Education opportunities for alumni

Tactics:
- Fall Back on CU for CE
- Develop more web based programs
- Engage more faculty and alumni in development of CE programs

Goal #2: To develop and foster strategic and effective communications with alumni

Strategy: Gather and send news/information in a regular and timely fashion to pharmacy alumni

Tactics:
- Improve and sustain informative and interactive website for the Alumni Association
- Maintain an online alumni directory
- Improve the quantity and maintain the quality of content in all forms of communication from the Alumni Association
- Continue to produce Campbell Comments on a quarterly basis

Strategy: Make personal contact with as many alumni as possible

Tactics:
- Continue the development of outreach programs to become a systematic process of the organization
- Broaden the geographical areas of outreach visits as resources permit

Strategy: Develop marketing tools for the association

Tactics:
- Develop a tag line for the association
- Remain consistent with use of the logo on all association items to create a visual representation of the organization

Goal #3: To develop alumni leaders and increase alumni participation

Strategy: Develop resources to enhance the recruitment of volunteers for participation on the Alumni Board of Directors and board committees.

Tactics:
- Create a volunteer handbook explaining the responsibilities and expectations for Board Members and committees
- Clearly define roles of Board Members and committees when recruiting volunteers
- Develop a training meeting for new alumni board members to explain and motivate volunteers to accomplish the responsibilities and expectations
- Eliminate ineffective volunteer roles, responsibilities and programs
- Identify best practices from other alumni associations

Strategy: Develop meaningful work for alumni to provide service to CUSOP beyond the Board of Directors

Tactics:
• Create and promote new opportunities for alumni involvement through committee participation.
• Clearly define volunteer responsibilities and expectations of volunteers for each committee.
• Eliminate ineffective volunteer roles, responsibilities and programs
• Identify best practices from other alumni associations
• Identify projects that alumni can complete without meeting attendance
• Expand on-campus opportunities by partnering with the Pharmacy Alumni Student Association (PASA) and Admissions Committee

Goal #4: Improve alumni membership

_Strategy:_ Retain and increase Alumni Association membership

_Tactics:_
- Work to maintain a 30% membership base
- Maintain 10% lifetime members out of the 30% membership base
- Leverage PASA membership with discounted rate into the Alumni Association
- Implement campaigns to reach non-members annually
- Improve retention rate of annual members

_Strategy:_ Leverage Pharmacy Alumni Student Association (PASA) Membership

_Tactics:_
- Maintain relationship with PASA
- Ensure that all students receive at least 2 issues of *Campbell Comments* magazine before they graduate
- Develop programs and events targeted to helping students succeed in their career aspirations (i.e. mentorship program)

_Strategy:_ Recruit alumni from the Master of Science programs at the School of Pharmacy.

_Tactics:_
- Create positions on the Board of Directors to represent the MS Clinical Research and MS Pharmaceutical Sciences programs
- Invite and encourage alumni from the Master of Science programs to join the association and participate through various volunteer opportunities and events

Goal #5: Increase financial resources of CUSOP and the Alumni Association.

_Strategy:_ Assist in developing efforts to increase the percentage of alumni making charitable gifts

_Tactics:_
- Create and implement new alumni giving strategies
- Develop specific giving programs for key stakeholder groups
- Incorporate the importance and impact of charitable giving to the university in all forms of communication
- Systematically study and enact membership dues increases as necessary and appropriate
- Update website to include more convenient way to donate (example: automatic monthly withdrawals, membership renewal, online store, etc.)
• Incorporate non-Campbell online communities (i.e. Facebook, mySpace, etc.) to increase contact with Alumni
• Invest more in our current students in the form of scholarships so that when they graduate they will invest back to the Alumni Association

Strategy: Find creative ways to generate ongoing income or limit expenditures.

Tactics:
• Place association lifetime membership monies into a interest-bearing account
• Increase corporate sponsorship of various Alumni Association programs and events
• Increase alumni sponsorship of various Alumni Association programs and events in exchange for free or discounted advertisement
• Increase alumni involvement in preceptorship, sub-committees, and other various volunteer events
• Increase sales of alumni related items (i.e. via online store)
• Increase the amount of alumni sponsored events both on campus and off campus

Goal #6: The Alumni Association will become self-supporting separate from the university.

Strategy: Become a 501c organization

Tactics:
• Learn from best practices of other alumni associations

Critical Factors for Success
The following factors are critical to the success of this plan:
• Strong and accountable volunteer leadership with clear responsibilities
• A mission and vision for all groups
• Interactive and solutions-based communications
• Adequate financial resources to get the job done
• Continued growth in charitable giving by alumni

Conclusion
This plan should be viewed as a “work-in-progress” with refinements, additions and modifications expected as additional data is collected, best practices are identified, and responsibilities are assigned. Evaluation tools designed to assess progress will complete the planning process. These tools may include:
• Readership of communications
• Ad-hoc evaluation by the Alumni Board
• Focus groups of faculty, staff and Alumni Association members

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