



GSU Alumni Association Board of Directors Retreat & Meeting (Q1) Minutes

Georgia State University Alumni Association
Sep 9, 2022 at 9:00 AM EDT
@ Atlanta Botanical Garden (1345 Piedmont Ave Atlanta, GA 30309)

Attendance

Members Present:

Renee Bazemore, LaTonya Brown, Dave Cohen, Iliana Cuadros, Suman Gera, Jay Kahn, Alan Kauffmann, Denise Kennedy, Randall Kent, Ellen Kinsey, Emily Love, Christina Million, Sherrill Moss, Marcia Oglesby, Cathy Scarver, Frank Strickland, Joel Thibodeaux, Nikita Trivedi, and Precious Wade

Members Absent:

James Dykhouse, Chinwe Gaines, Tracy Hoffman, Jenny Lehigh, and Seanie Zappendorf

Guests Present:

Jonas Hayes

I. Coffee

Everyone will meet in the Garden Classroom

II. Call to Order/Welcome (Presenters: Cathy Scarver)

Cathy Scarver called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

III. Introduction of New Board Members (Presenters: Joel Thibodeaux, Suman Gera, Denise Kennedy)

Suman, Denise, and Joel introduced themselves to the Board.

IV. Ice Breaker (Presenters: LaTonya Brown, Marcia Oglesby)

All the board members and staff played Panther Bingo.

V. Structural Overview of University, Advancement, and Alumni Association (Presenters: Jay Kahn)

Endowment

Viewed the University Advancement Vision statement in the PowerPoint. When comparing Georgia State to other large public institutions (120 schools), the endowment size is around 114th-115th out of 120. For our institution, the endowment has yet to catch up. The focus is to grow the endowment. When discussing the endowment, margins of excellence (MOE) come about. MOE is where \$500,000 to \$1 million is allocated, depending on endowment returns, scholarships, and other things across campus. The foundation endowment is responsible for filling the gap in Panther Retention Grants.

Please review the organization structures in the PowerPoint or the Retreat Binder.

Financial Overview

Advancement has two budgets: The state and foundation budgets. There are two categories: restricted and unrestricted. Most gifts that come into the university are restricted. Endowed vs. non-endowed is another category of gifts. Most large gifts are pushed towards being endowed.

Student success is always a top priority. Jay mentioned that when President Blake started, he wanted to focus on the unmet needs of students. That is where the majority of the projects are concentrated. Campaigning is being done for a new SIM Lab in the Urban Life building.

Campaign Assessment

- Leadership: President Blake
- Organization and staffing: Understaffed in critical areas. The university is investing in our division. Point out that engagement and communication are very broad for two people.
- Giving and Prospect: Going from two people to five people.
- Systems and Operations: Technology is where they identified deficiencies.
- Communication: A significant area of focus. Communication was all over, and everyone wasn't synced with the university. We need to use data more efficiently. Also, using Marketing Cloud more.

Recommendations: Campaign summits will be part of branding and campaign messaging development.

Question from Alan Kauffman: On a few slides back, I saw that Deans are reluctant to participate in fundraising. What is the issue going on with that?

Response from Jay: I think it is like any function. Like I tell people, fundraising is a huge part of being a dean or the president or provost, but it is not a percentage of time where it comes down to job description. It is not necessarily a skill set consistent with being a leader in academia sometimes. All the deans have front-line fundraisers they are responsible for working with, and most of those positions are split 50/50 between advancement and the college.

Question from Alan Kauffman: Is there something being done to be an incentive to improve their skill set?

Response from Jay: We got a grant from the state to train that leadership around fundraising. A year and a half ago, all the deans underwent a four-week curriculum. Then, a couple of months ago, we had a Foundation Board Retreat where we brought all the deans and their front-line fundraisers for a six-hour training session. We always coach the fundraisers that it is important that you put your Dean in a position where they can be successful. There are some Deans who are relational and have no problem asking for money, and there are some Deans who are uncomfortable with it.

Follow-up from Alan: Is this going on with every university, right?

Response from Jay: 100%

VI. Three-Year Strategic Plan (Presenters: Jay Kahn)

Jay discussed the three-year strategic plan in the above notes.

VII. Overview of the Alumni Association (Presenters: Christina Million)

 [Board retreat-22.pptx](#)

Christina brought up a point that before her and Jay's time, it used to be that alumni's focus was their college and not Georgia State. In the surveys the Alumni office did with alums, people considered themselves more attached to their college versus the university. When Christina started at Georgia State and was asked to speak at Robinson College of Business, they introduced her as a Robinson College of Business Grad, which she is. However, she mentioned that she was a Georgia State Graduate. They shut her down and told her she was not a Georgia State graduate but a Robinson graduate. That was the way it was for a long time.

Jay brought up the 380,000 alums with a degree and non-degree. Christina only uses numbers for those with a degree, which is 292,024. Currently, 192,658 alumni live in Metro Atlanta, 70% of

our alums. There are 218,000 alumni in the state of Georgia. There are 920 Life Members and eight full-time staff. When Jay mentioned how our money per student is dead last in the country, our team per alum is last. We have eight staff members, which means 36,000 alumni per person. If you remove Precious and Iliana because their jobs are particular and not programmatic, it will be around 48,000 per staff member.

The Alumni Association was founded in 1929 and was a dues-paying organization from 1996 through 2021. The Board has at least 15 elected directors, which everyone in the room is a part of, with no more than 30 directors.

There are 13 years of football and over 6,000 students living on campus. In 2011, the first alumni scholarships were awarded, and the Student Alumni Association was introduced. The Panther Plate was released in 2013. These things are new compared to most universities. Our organization is young in many things that we are doing.

Events

- 100+ Events Annually (COVID had 95+ virtual events)
- It is the 10th Anniversary of GSU Cares, Resume Review, and Senior Brunch and Learns
- Distinguished Alumni Awards has only been around since 2010, prior it was a luncheon held at Commencement
- 63% of the people who attend events are women
- 52% of the people who attend events are African-American
- 24% of the people who attend events are from the College of Arts and Sciences
- 31% of the people who attend events are between the ages of 30-39 years old
- 56% of the people who attend events graduated between '11-'22
- 35% of the people who attended Homecoming Tailgate donated following the events
- 34% of the people who attend events joined a volunteer organization

Scholarships

- The first scholarships were awarded in 2011; the amount was close to \$30,000
- For 2022-2023, the scholarship amount is \$89,000
- For 2023-2024, the scholarship amount will be over \$100,000.

Year-End Life Membership

- 914 Life Members
- Life Member match as of last year is ~70,500
- 271 donors-directly to the Alumni Association
- The average gift is \$248
- Net income is \$113,000
- The average net income since 2011 has been \$108,200 (COVID year was taken out)

VIII. Overview of Programs and Events (Presenter: Renee Bazemore)

Renee started the presentation with a game of Kahoot about board information.

Renee gave a high-level overview of the Alumni Association's signature events that the board should be familiar with and support, such as Distinguished Alumni Awards, 40 under 40 Awards, Homecoming Tailgate, Senior Brunch & Learn, Third Thursdays, GSU Cares, Resume Review, and Dinner with 12 Panthers. Additionally, Renee explained the affinity partnership relationships (Liberty Mutual, Jostens, GSU Bookstore, and Travel Program), which are revenue sources.

Renee explained the transition of the alumni networks to an affinity model. The new opportunity allows the alumni staff to continue serving alums' special interests through an affinity program model that better utilizes the time and expertise of the assistant director and provides a sustainable format for delivering events around shared interests and bonds.

IX. Purpose of the Alumni Association Board of Directors (Presenter: Renee Bazemore)

Renee talked to the board about their legal duties, the duty of care, the duty of loyalty, and the duty of obedience. She reviewed the primary roles of the board to govern and strategize board expectations and board committee responsibilities. Each board committee chair gave a brief description of what their committee does, and everyone was asked to sign-up for a committee or task force before the end of the meeting. A task force was added to help increase alum engagement in events such as site leaders for GSU Cares.

X. Lunch

XI. Board Business (Presenter: Cathy Scarver)

A. Minutes (Presenter: Cathy Scarver)

The minutes from the June meeting still need to be prepared. Once they are ready, they will be sent out through email and voted on.

B. Financials (Presenter: Christina Million)

Christina reviewed the June and July financial statements. On one had any questions.

 [Preliminary Budget FY23-As of July 7, 2022.pdf](#)

 [AA Financials as of June 30, 2022.pdf](#)

 [AA Financials as of July 31, 2022.pdf](#)

AA Financials July 21, 2022

- C. Life Member Match (Presenter: Christina Million)

Christina talked to the board about extending the Life Member Match through the fiscal year 2023.

Motion:

I am moving to continue the Life Member Match for FY23.

Motion moved by Randall Kent and seconded by Frank Strickland.

- D. Board Recruiting Needs (Presenter: Renee Bazemore)

Renee mentioned that the board and governance committee would begin recruiting new board members.

- E. Old/New Business (Presenter: Cathy Scarver & Renee Bazemore)

Renee mentioned that a discussion took place in the executive committee about amending the term limit of the Emeritus, which would require a bylaw change.

Discussion: there was an in-depth discussion about the motion wording to ensure the language was clear and concise.

Motion:

I move to remove the two-year term from the emeritus group requirement to no term limit.

Motion moved by Suman Gera and seconded by LaTonya Brown.

- XII. How to "Dig in" / "Get Involved" (Presenters: Ellen Kinsey)

In FY22, there were over 112 events with 5,087 attendees. Along with the number of events, there were 227 volunteer engagement opportunities. The Alumni Association gained eight new sponsors, an \$7,200 increase from the previous year. The Alumni Association host various events like Best of Blue (with the Young Alumni Council), GSU Cares, Homecoming Tailgate, and more. One of the signature events held through the Alumni Association office is the Distinguished Alumni Awards, also known as DAA. The Distinguished Alumni Awards is where Georgia State celebrates Alumni who personify leadership and acknowledge their professional, philanthropic, and personal achievements. This year, the awards ceremony will take place Friday, October 28, 2022, at the Stave Room from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

This year's honorees are:

- Neda Barqawi
- W. Franklin Evans
- Deepak Raghavan
- Ray Uttenhove
- Christopher Volk

Please review the PowerPoint for sponsorships and pricing. Ellen talked about ways the Alumni Board could be involved, which are:

- Attend/Sponsor the celebration
- Invite fellow alums to attend
- Cultivate future BOD members
- Nominate Alumni

For more information about DAA, visit alumni.gsu.edu/daa.

The following upcoming signature event is 40 Under 40, launched in 2018. This event honors influential and impactful Georgia State graduates who exemplify the university's values. Nominations opened to the public on August 19, 2022. The deadline to nominate is September 23, 2022. Once the deadline closes, there will be no more nominations. Applications close on November 7th, 2022. On December 16th, 2022, honorees are announced. The ceremony will take place on March 31, 2023. Information about the event can be found at alumni.gsu.edu/40under40.

Ellen talked about ways the Alumni Board can be involved, which are:

- Nominate someone
- Promote the event through your social networks
- Serve on the selection committee
- Attend the celebration
- Sponsor the event

One event, hosted by Jenny, is Third Thursday. Third Thursday is a networking event held on the third Thursday of every month. There are ten events per year, with all of them being \$10. The \$10 allows alums to get two drink tickets, light refreshments, giveaways, and more.

Ellen talked about ways the Alumni Board can be involved in Third Thursday:

- Attend as an ambassador of the Alumni

Association and GSU:

- Speak at events
- Share ideas about venues and programming

Our next signature event, hosted by Jenny, is GSU Cares. GSU cares on April 8th, 2023, at various sites. This is our annual day of Service. Everyone, including faculty, staff, students, and our community, comes together and gives back to the community. For more information on GSU cares, visit alumni.gsu.edu/gsucares.

Ways, the Alumni Board, can be involved in GSU Cares:

- Serve as site leaders
- Sponsor the event
- Promote through social media
- Share project ideas

Please view the PowerPoint for a complete list of events throughout the Fall semester!

XIII. Breakout Working Groups

 [Board Committees FY23_Sept22.pdf](#)

Due to lack of time, Breakout Groups were not held.

XIV. OnBoard Overview (Presenters: Renee Bazemore)

Due to lack of time, the review of OnBoard was not held.

XV. GSU Athletics- Men's Basketball Coach (Presenters: Jonas Hayes)

 [JH BIO.pdf](#)

Coach Jonas Hayes talked with the board about his journey to becoming Georgia State University's Men's Basketball Head Coach. Coach Hayes talked about how ecstatic he is to work with the board and wants to bring this partnership to his players.

XVI. Adjourn/Social (Presenters: Cathy Scarver, Randall Kent)

Cathy Scarver adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m. Everyone moved to the social hour.