

**Meeting Minutes**  
Alumni Board, St. Olaf College  
November 5-6, 2009

Thursday, November 5

Present

Alumni Board President Katherine Hoyland Barnett '79, Brenda Berkman '73, Linda Aasen Bjerke '63, Sean Buress '94, Larry Christensen '61, Carol Schierenbeck Eisinger '74, Katherine Kroeger '99, Mitch Lehn '92, Mildred "Mickey" Matzke Monsen '49, Kate Bollman Pearce '01, Gary Perkins '80, Joy Akosua Quaidoo '97, Dan Rustad '95, Greg Steeber '70

Absent

Ted Hillestad '99, Bruce Wahl '87, Magdalena Wells '08

Also Present (some for a portion)

Allen Baker, Website Specialist, Enoch Blazis, Senior Director of Development; Sheri Eichhorn, Club Events Coordinator; Matt Fedde '06, Associate Director of Annual Giving; Tracy Fossum, Director of Annual Giving; Jackie Henry '82, Director of Advancement Services; Diana Mueller P'97, Alumni and Parent Relations Office Coordinator; Amy Pagel, Assistant Director of Annual Giving; Heidi Quiram, Associate Director of Alumni Relations & Study Travel programs; Nicole Schroeder, Assistant Director of Annual Giving, Kathy Schuurman P'02, P'04, Associate Director of Alumni and Parent Relations, Nathan Soland '04, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations; Mike Stitsworth P'05, Vice President for Advancement and College Relations; Janet Kringen Thompson '70, Associate Vice President of Advancement & College Relations, Meredith Utt '08, Assistant Director of Alumni and Parent Relations

Meeting began at 12:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions by Katherine Barnett

Opening Devotions by Pastoral Intern Andy Willis '03

Discussion on role of the Alumni Board

Katherine gave a brief review of the history of the Board and discussed where the Board is at present. She also introduced the idea of creating a Partners Advisory Board.

- In the past, the Alumni Board was made up of two groups—engagement and giving
- Current model is volunteer driven and focused on both engagement and giving
- The creation of a Partners Advisory Board would be helpful to both the Alumni Board and Partners in Annual Giving
  - Overlap of the two groups would create a useful synergy
  - Provide more alumni ownership in the fundraising process, allow volunteers to hold the vision of how alumni/parents/friends “own” the annual fund

- The Partners Board would meet 2 times per year, one member would also sit on the Alumni Board
  - 7-10 members would make up the Partners Board
  - Partners wants to take the face of St. Olaf off of annual giving and replace it with the face of alums instead
  - Goal is to grow the Partners program with more volunteers
- Larry moved to develop a Partners Board, Greg seconded the motion

### Questions and Comments

*How connected will Partners Board members be with the classmates they are soliciting?*  
Tracy emphasized the volunteers on the new Board will still work on building relationships with those they are asking to give. Alumni Board members can and should still continue working and interacting with their classmates and alums in their areas to foster goodwill for both events and giving.

*It will be important for parents and friends of St. Olaf to be represented on the Board.*

*How did the class of 1961 achieve such a high giving rate?*  
Many CFAs were involved—having many CFAs is a crucial element for all classes wanting to increase their giving rate

*What is lost from the Alumni Board role with the creation of a Partners Board?*  
The focus of the annual fund won't be as strong at Alumni Board meetings, but will still be part of the overall Board discussions. Additionally, by limiting some of these discussions there will be additional volunteer opportunities and duties available for Alumni Board ownership (i.e. alumni award processes, class newsletters, etc)

### Development Discussion

Led by Mike, Enoch, Tracy, and Jackie

- Due to staff turnover, it has been a process to figure out what the shared vision for the Advancement and College Relations division is.
- Current development and fundraising strategy is to focus on 3 groups—Partners, planned giving, and parents and grandparents
- The college needs a new set of prospects as we move into a new campaign in the coming years—one large focus of the next campaign will be to raise more money for financial aid
- To identify the prospect pool, the college employs many research strategies to find the right prospect, the right gift, and the right time.
- The current state of the Annual Fund is good:
  - Volunteers are increasing. There were 425 volunteers as of June 1, by November the number was up to 542
  - Need to continue this trajectory

- Reunion classes are currently very strong
- The Partners staff has embraced the concept of volunteer management well
  - 280 donors ahead this year compared to this time last year
  - Class letters are better and have gone out sooner
  - Phoning program has connected to all parts of Partners
  - Young alums are shining—50% of the class of '08 gave last year
- The FY10 goals of Partners are 30% participation, \$3.9 million dollars raised

### Questions/Comments

*Does St. Olaf intend to increase development staff numbers?*

Yes, before a new campaign is launched.

*Are people who can donate time, services, art collections, etc researched as part of the prospect pool?*

This is not currently a large focus group of the development team, but this should be considered as the staff numbers grow.

### Alumni Board President Report

Katherine reported on discussions from the recent Board of Regents meeting

- #1 issue with the Regents is the state of the economy and the impact on St. Olaf
- \$110 million annual budget at the college
  - Comprised of money from Partners and the endowment
- The college heavily depends on tuition and enrollment numbers
  - Concerned with how many students apply and accept and are then cherry picked away by other colleges with more financial aid capability
- Despite the economic challenges faced by similar institutions around the country, St. Olaf was able to hire 10 new tenured faculty last year. This is a big selling point in our favor
- Modest, one-time bonuses were given to faculty and staff this year in light of the economy
- The college did not suffer major lay-offs or furloughs
- Another issue with the Board is the “domino effect” in terms of campus buildings
  - Old Science will become the heart of campus after renovation, will house all student services
  - \$22 million price tag to renovate the building
  - \$5.5 million currently raised, still need at least \$4 million more to fully move forward
  - Pre-planning is in the works for the next campaign
- Regents are looking to the Alumni Board for ideas in how we can increase giving and giving dollars
- Concerned about Admissions and competitive nature of colleges in the Midwest
  - Thinking about how we can best market ourselves
- Overall, the Regents feel good about having weathered the economic storm so far

### Alumni Board Members Share Highlights/News Since Last Meeting

*Katherine Barnett, Washington, DC:* current events include book club, lefse making, theater events, and monthly happy hours. Hope to host another theater event in the spring and find an alum to speak at their “Nourish the Mind” speaker series. There were 40 people at the DC summer picnic and the Ole Occasions and Opportunities newsletter continues to be a good vehicle for area alums to announce events and news.

*Greg Steeber and Kate Pearce, Gala update:* The Gala is going well, better than this time last year. There is more space at the venue, attendance goal is to increase by 50%. The committee is still seeking more corporate sponsors and items for the auctions. Format of the event will be similar, with new elements such as allowing far away guests to bid via phone. Encouraged the Board to spread the word about the event and help procure auction items.

*Katherine Kroeger, Seattle:* The send off picnic in August was a success as were Pete Sandberg and Mac Gimse’s talks. Upcoming events include lefse making, organizing a healthcare speaker, and a possible ski race in Sun Valley.

*Mitch Lehn, Denver:* St. Olaf on the Road in Denver was great, the Rockies game and summer picnics were a success. Upcoming events include a hockey game, cookie bake/care packaging, skiing, pool party, Day of Service at the food pantry, and events focused on young alums in Boulder.

*Sean Burrell, Twin Cities/Business community:* General Mills Oles created a video for students; at least one student talking with General Mills each week for information sessions, informational interviews, etc.

*Mickey Monsen and Carol Eisinger, Chicago:* Faculty speaker in the summer was not very successful, ethnic dinners continue in the suburbs and downtown, 2 happy hours held so far, plan is to continue them once a month. The new student picnic was a success with over 94 people. Future events include a “Where We Are” panel of Chicago alums and Day of Service. Carol suggested Day of Service volunteers deserve more of a thank you from the College for their participation.

*Brenda Berkman, NYC:* trying to re-engage people in the club. The recent survey wasn’t successful. The art gallery happy hour had 50 people attend of various ages. Future events include lefse making, ice skating, Day of Service, St. Olaf on the Road, and the Syttende Mai parade. Brenda is working on a “New to New York” network that will connect alums new to the city with old timers.

*Linda Bjerke, Twin Cities:* Conversations lecture series is going well with lots of walk ins. Sent a class email message highlighting alumni events for 2009-2010 including the Black and Gold Gala. Also discussed class goals for PAG and thanked solicitation team.

*Paul Christenson, Twin Cities:* Shared an update on his class 55<sup>th</sup> reunion. \$55,000 gift challenge, already have \$50,000 raised. Journeys program continues to be successful.

*Larry Christensen, Texas:* currently working with 9 volunteers in North Texas. Jolene Chambers '74 is the club chairperson. Hoping to have more museum events, summer picnic is in the works. They will also do an event when the choir is in town in February 2011.

*Joy Quaidoo, Twin Cities and MASS:* MASS executive committee established, by-laws created, 80 plus members, partnered with MACCO, have Facebook page, working to bring alums back to Senior Multicultural Banquet. Joy also established a United Healthcare Ole group.

*Dan Rustad, Twin Cities:* continues to work on sponsorship committee for the Gala, recruited Neuger Communications Group as a sponsor. Helped recruit chairs for his reunion, attended fall concert at the Pause with friends, interested in exploring the ideas of how alums can partner with students at the Pause for a concert.

*Gary Perkins, Twin Cities:* launching marketing plan for the Gala, involved with Ole Connections networking group/LinkedIn, helping connect OleVentures students with alums. Working with prospective students, focused on networking in the Ole community.

#### Role of Alumni Board Members in the Alumni Awards Process

Kathy Schuurman updated the committee on the awards process

- 4 different categories of awards, focusing on engagement with the college, church, community, and excellence in career. The GOLD Award is given to an exceptional graduate of the last decade.
- The Alumni Office needs help identifying potential winners
- Board can help by taking on nomination packets for nominees
  - Help build packets by finding additional information, documents, collecting letters of support on behalf of nominee
  - If interested in helping build a packet, please talk to Kathy
  - Also consider if you know someone else who could help build a packet for one of the nominees and let Kathy know

#### Dinner with President Anderson and Priscilla Paton

The Alumni Board dined with the President and his wife at their residence.

#### St. Olaf Orchestra Concert

Many members attended the St. Olaf Orchestra concert in Skoglund Auditorium.

Friday, November 6, 2009

#### Present

Alumni Board President Katherine Hoyland Barnett '79, Brenda Berkman '73, Linda Aasen Bjerke '63, Sean Burress '94, Larry Christensen '61, Paul Christenson '55, Carol Schierenbeck Eisinger '74, Ted Hillestad '99, Katherine Kroeger '99, Mitch Lehn '92,

Mildred “Mickey” Matzke Monsen ’49, Kate Bollman Pearce ’01, Gary Perkins ’80, Dan Rustad ’95, Greg Steeber ’70, Magdalena Wells ’08

Absent

Bruce Wahl ’87, Joy Akosua Quaidoo ’97

Also present (some for a portion)

Enoch Blazis, Senior Director of Development; Sheri Eichhorn, Club Events Coordinator; Matt Fedde ’06, Assistant Director of Annual Giving; Tracy Fossum, Director of Annual Giving; Michael Kyle ’85, Vice President and Dean of Enrollment; Diana Mueller P’97, Alumni and Parent Relations Office Coordinator; Amy Pagel, Assistant Director of Annual Giving; Nathan Soland ’04, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations; Kathy Schuurman P’02, P’04, Associate Director of Alumni and Parent Relations; Nicole Schroeder, Assistant Director of Annual Giving; Mike Stitsworth p’05, Vice President for Advancement and College Relations, Janet Kringen Thompson ’70, Associate Vice President of Advancement & College Relations, Meredith Utt ’08, Assistant Director of Alumni and Parent Relations

Meeting began at 8:30 a.m.

Regroup Time

The Partners Board discussion was re-visited. Several additional questions were raised:

*Is this model in effect at any other Lutheran College?*

Staff were not positive about Lutheran Colleges, but noted several examples from peer institutions like Williams, Carleton, and Grinnell.

*Will the chair of the Partners Board sit on the Board of Regents?*

It’s not clear yet, but he/she will be heavily involved with the Advancement and College Relations division.

*Pros and cons of being on one board vs. both?*

Obvious cons of serving on both include the additional time commitment required and the difficulties of being dedicated to more than one group. Pros of serving on just one board include the ability to be very engaged and involved with which ever board would better fit personal interests.

*How long is the evaluation period to see if the new Board model works?*

At least five years would be required. Tracy has a 5-7 year plan of objectives for Partners. Outcomes may be difficult to measure at first.

- Unanimous committee approval to create a Partners Board.
- Katherine discussed Board openings and the need for nominations to replace those going off the Board.

- Chicago will need to nominate 1, MASS needs to nominate 1, Twin Cities needs to nominate 2 new representatives
- The Board needs a chair-elect by the end of the April '10 meeting.
- Looking for members to fill geographic roles, serve as Partners liaison, those with skills in social media and networking skills, members to oversee the class newsletter process, advise Study Travel, and the CEL.
- Make sure to tell Nathan of any nominations by February

#### Make care packages for groups studying abroad

This was a success! We sent 3 boxes off to the international programs this week.

#### New Reunion Model Discussion

Nathan explained the new model of Reunion Weekend

- Beginning in June 2011, St. Olaf will offer one reunion weekend – replacing the previously existing two – to honor and celebrate all 14 reunions at the same time
- This weekend is the same as Northfield High School graduation, but separate from Carleton graduation and their reunion weekend
- Reunion events will be held predominately on campus and in Northfield
- Classmates will have the opportunity to stay together in residence halls
- The alcohol policy may be addressed for future Reunion Weekends, but not for the first in 2011.
- Possible campus events include special class gatherings, outdoor activities, back to the classroom sessions, book discussions, worship services, an all-alumni dance, children's activities, and more
- The reuniting classes in 2011—the 1's and 6's—are especially strong
- Reunion Weekend 2011 will also celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the St. Olaf Choir with a special choir reunion

#### Online Directory and Web Training Session

Allen Baker and Sheri Eichhorn led the group training on how to use the APR website.

- All upcoming events are located on the APR Event page and the regional club pages
- Black and Gold Gala website is up and running. Auction items are listed on the site as well as photos from last year, Look Who's Coming, event details etc
- Alumni Board Members are listed on the site with brief bios
- You can now update your online directory profile with more detailed information
- You can now change your log in and/or password on the online directory
  - After logging in, click on "change your settings" to enter a new password and/or username

#### Student Alumni Association Report

SAA coordinator, Kelly Hawley '10 updated the Board on student happenings

- Students are very busy with academics, projects, and research
- Outside of the classroom students are busy with athletics, Christmas Fest rehearsals, theater, and special events

- The student Homecoming theme this year was “Circus on the Hill”
- PAC speaker this fall was Karl Rove
  - PAC is also hosting regular student debates
- Current SGA issues include the parking policy, meal plan costs, creating a class rating system for peer to peer feedback
- Student Activities Committee just approved a new Norwegian Club
- The Clean Energy Revolving Fund (CERF) is currently conducting a “Leave your mark challenge”
- SAA’s goal this year was to increase participation and overall membership
  - So far these goals are being met
  - Upcoming SAA events include Day of Service, etiquette dinner, Philanthropy Week, and Alumni Board Connection Breakfast in the spring

### Enrollment and Financial Aid Discussion

Michael Kyle ’85 reviewed the successes and challenges of enrolling the class of 2013 and shared predictions for the future

- Things that went well last year include:
  - Successful transition to single notification of acceptance
  - Class goal for new students was met while increasing selectivity; yield held
  - 27 degree-seeking international students arrived on campus this year
  - Reached a milestone of diversity enrollment—106 current students of color
  - 53% of class is from outside of MN
  - Stable academic profile
- Challenges include:
  - Applicant pool didn’t grow as projected
  - Missed revenue targets
  - Gender imbalance, more females than male students
  - Missed Davis Scholar target by one student—thus didn’t receive additional funds from this scholarship program
  - Price points of other colleges create difficulty of competition
- Admitted student questionnaire has been helpful to determine how St. Olaf rates against competitors
  - Rates importance of college characteristics
- MN, Lutheran, legacy males have the most ability to bring St. Olaf revenue
- At the end of the day, we have to find more students who can afford to pay the St. Olaf price

(Michael’s presentation included many graphs of data. If you are interested in viewing these, please let us know and we will arrange for a copy of the slideshow to be sent to you.)

### Next Meetings

**Spring 2010**

April 22-23

**Fall 2010**

Nov. 4-5

**Spring 2011**

April 7-8

**Fall 2011**

Nov. 3-4

**Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. to attend Founders Day Events.**