

Alumni Affairs

Office of Alumni Affairs

Introduction

Unit Mission:

To strengthen alumni ties and encourage lifelong support of McNeese State University so these resources can be used to support the successful education of undergraduate students and provide operational assistance to serve the campus community, donors, employers, alumni, and community members.

Institutional Mission Reference:

Financial support from alumni helps provide academic support, research opportunities, support of student activities, physical plant improvements, faculty support, and scholarships. Alumni also support the University by hiring McNeese graduates, providing internships, and helping to recruit future students.

Performance Objective 1 Connect alumni to their alma mater so that they will want to help financially support the University's mission of providing a successful education of undergraduate students and be able to provide operational assistance.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: >2% yearly increase in McNeese Alumni donations to the Annual Fund.

1.1 Data

Fiscal Year	Annual Fund Income	% change
2013-2014	N/A	+9.1%
2014-2015	N/A	+22%
2015-2016	\$175,990.18	+13%
2016-2017	\$186,494.15	+6%
2017-2018	\$199,297.79	+6.8%
2018-2019	\$211,876.69	+6.3%

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Reviewed # and % of address updates received from contracts with Alumni Finder for the class years of 2008 (20%), 2003 (22%), and 1998 (15%). Then designed and ran reports showing # and % of donors for each class year. Data from these combined reports led us to contract with Alumni Finder to update more records.

We then targeted non-donors from selected years to receive the 2017 non-donor fund drive mailer. Previous donors receive a personalized letter. This data also is used to determine the priority calling during the annual Phonathon.

2017-2018:

- Exceeded benchmark with a 6.8% increase in the Annual Fund from the prior year.
- Previous donors received a personalized letter solicitation. The non-donor solicitation was sent to all non-donors and lapsed records excluding the class of 2016. 61 new donors were obtained for a total of \$6,535.
- The record updates were also used to determine priority calling during the Annual Phonathon.
- Because the benchmark has been consistently met, we will increase the benchmark to >4% for 2018-2019.

2018-2019:

- Exceeded benchmark with a 6.3% increase in alumni donations over the prior year.
- There were 200 new donors who gave a total of \$13,830 for this fiscal year.
- We ran the classes of 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017. These 38,323 records were run through AlumniFinder and 6,878 of them were updated.
- During the coming year we will be merging the Foundation's database in with ours, which is expected to be a lengthy process. For this reason, I will only increase the benchmark to >4% as we could be limited by times in which we can access the database for fundraising.

2 Assessment and Benchmark

Assessment: Event attendance for all Ag Alumni Chapter, Black Alumni Chapter, and Greater Houston Alumni Chapter events.

Benchmark: Average of 50 attendees per event.

2.1 Data

Fiscal Year	# of events	# in attendance*	Average attendance
2017-2018	9	580	64.4

2018-2019	11	776	70.5
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*# in attendance is only an approximation.

2.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

Chapter events for the year included six Black Alumni Chapter meetings, the Annual Black Alumni Chapter Trailblazer Awards, Houston Chapter Crawfish Boil, and Ag Alumni Crawfish Boil. Since attendance varies greatly by event, we would recommend a benchmark of an average of 50 attendees per event.

2018-2019:

We have established two years of continued growth in the number of events as well as the number of attendees. Exceeded our benchmark for these two years. Should this trend continue, we will reevaluate our benchmark next year.

3 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Obtain annual corporate sponsorships of \$20,000 or greater to help offset event expenses.

3.1 Data

Fiscal Year	Income from corporate sponsorships
2013-2014	\$23,000.00
2014-2015	\$19,000.00
2015-2016	\$20,000.00
2016-2017	\$23,600.00
2017-2018	\$23,500.00
2018-2019	\$22,500.00

3.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Continue to work with the sponsorship committee to meet in July to start renewal process. Deliver sponsor packets in early August to those who have renewed in order that they can have pre-game admission.

2017-2018:

Sponsorship committee and alumni staff work to renew previous sponsors as well as obtain new sponsors. Sponsorship income decreased by \$100 due to the loss of a corporate sponsor from business closure. The sponsorship committee will actively seek renewals and new businesses for the coming year and will review the sponsorship packet to make it more attractive to businesses.

2018-2019:

While we lost \$1,000 in corporate sponsorships, we still met our benchmark. We may have lost our contact with one of our major \$5,000 corporate sponsors. We will be asking each board member to contact one possible new sponsor over the summer months. We are also reviewing the sponsorship program to see if there are any updates we can make that would make the package more enticing to the sponsors.

4 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Host pregame parties in Noland Alumni Pavilion and Alumni Grove for each home game – alumni attendees must possess Rowdy Card which means they have donated \$75.00 or more to the annual fund that year. Average attendance for each game should be >700.

4.1 Data

Fiscal Year	# of home games	Estimated average attendance per game
2016-2017	6	>6,000

	# of home	Estimated average	Estimated # of Rowdy

Fiscal Year	games	attendance per game	Card holders per game
2017-2018	5	>1,000	320
2018-2019	5	>725	280

4.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Continue to partner with PetroChem in hosting the pre-game tailgates. Alumni Association will need to provide adequate insurance coverage and special events permits for each game. Effective 2017-2018, average attendance per game and total number of Rowdy Card holders will be provided instead.

2017-2018:

Worked with Petrochem to continue hosting pre-game tailgates in the Alumni Grove and Noland Pavilion. Alumni Association provides volunteers to help staff event and obtains the necessary insurance coverage and special events permit for each game. Average attendance per game is estimated at approximately 1000. The number of Rowdy Card holders is estimated at 320 per game.

2018-2019:

Of the five home games this year, three were down in numbers due to rain. For this fiscal year there were 1,069 Rowdy Card members of which 670 are located within a 20-mile radius of the campus and each Rowdy Card gives a couple and their children entrance into the tailgate. For the previous year there were 1008 Rowdy Cards of which 625 were within 20 miles of the campus.

5 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Plan >8 alumni events during the year to engage and reconnect with alumni.

5.1 Data

2016-2017:

Hosted 16 events:

Golden Scholar Reunion; Distinguished Alumnus Awards Dinner; Champagne Bingo Fundraisers; Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament; Holiday Bookstore Sale; Past Alumni President's Reception; six home tailgate parties; Trailblazer Luncheon; Annual Family Crawfish Boil; Washington DC Crawfish Boil; and ULL RV and Tailgate Party.

2017-2018:

Hosted 15 events: Golden Scholar Reunion; Distinguished Alumnus Reception; Champagne Bingo Fundraiser; Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament; Holiday Bookstore Sale; Past Alumni President's Reception; five home tailgate parties; Trailblazer Luncheon; Annual Family Crawfish Boil; Washington DC Crawfish Boil; and Houston Chapter Crawfish Boil. Also assisted with the Pi Kappa Phi Reunion, ADPi Reunion, Ag Alumni Crawfish Boil, and Drums & Drafts Band Fundraiser.

2018-2019:

Hosted 23 events: Golden Scholar Reunion; Distinguished Alumnus Awards; Distinguished Service Awards, Champagne Bingo Fundraiser, Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament; Past Alumni President's Reception; Homecoming Parade Float and Fireworks Show; 5 home game tailgate parties; BAC Trailblazer Awards Banquet; Annual Family Crawfish Boil; Washington, DC/Louisiana Coalition Boil; Ag Alumni Chapter Crawfish Boil; BAC Cruise on the Lake Fundraiser; Holiday Bookstore Sale; two Grad Fests; Peerleader Reunion; and Kappa Alpha 50th Anniversary Reunion planning sessions.

5.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Add a minimum of one alumni roundup in Louisiana.

2017-2018:

Resumed the Houston Chapter Crawfish Boil, which was not held in the prior year.

The events listed above helped us to connect with a variety of alumni throughout the year. All of the events listed have been rescheduled for 2018-2019 with the exception of the Washington, DC Crawfish Boil, due to the decreasing attendance and increasing cost. We will also be assisting with the Peerleaders' 20-year Reunion in the upcoming year.

2018-2019:

Increase the benchmark from >8 to >12 events.

We did attend this year's 16th Washington, DC/Louisiana Coalition Crawfish Boil as it was agreed by all schools that this would be the final time to host this event. Staff is working on finding a site for a Houston, TX Roundup.

Attendance has been good at all events.

6 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Provide planning, staffing, and financial support for student recruitment and development, marketing, athletic programs, campus enhancement, alumni events, and general University needs. Financial support for these programs will be >\$50,000.

6.1 Data

Fiscal Year	Other Financial Support
2018-2019	\$63,824.25

2016-2017:

- Paid \$154,487.90 in expenses for construction of the Robert Noland Alumni Pavilion.
- Donated \$10,000 to Admissions & Recruiting; \$15,000 to McNeese Band for trip to London; \$3,500 to Athletics for Student-athlete of the month; \$2,000 for Business Scholarship; and \$1,350 sponsorship for Banners.
- Sponsored or co-sponsored Homecoming Fireworks Display, Student Alumni Ambassadors, McNeese Peer Leaders, Greek Philanthropy Awards, Banners Series, Academic Signing Day, Student Employee Awards, Cowboy Camp, Admissions & Recruiting, and water for Freshman Orientations.
- Remodeled existing office space to be a storeroom with access to Main Hall. Built and furnished 700 sq. ft. addition to replace the lost office space and remodeled existing offices to match the addition.
- Hosted fall and spring GradFest on campus for graduating seniors. Host two McNeese Official Ring Sales each year. Attend student activities such as Greek Banquet, Student Government Banquet, Undergraduate Research Day, Performing Arts Showcase, Juried Student Art Show, Welcome Back Day in fall and spring, Academic Signing Day, BAC Pizza Party, Cowboy Camp, GradFest in spring and fall, and Student Alumni events.

2017-2018:

- Donated \$2,600 to Admissions & Recruiting for the Sponsorship of Academic Signing Day Lunch; \$2,500 to McNeese Basketball for Season Tickets; \$3,500 to Athletics for Student-athlete of the month; \$1,000 for Social Tables Event Layout Software; \$1,350 Banners Sponsorship; and \$500 CODOFIL Scholarship.
- Sponsored or co-sponsored Homecoming Fireworks Display, Student Alumni Ambassadors, McNeese Peerleaders, Greek Philanthropy Awards, Cowboy Camp, Admissions & Recruiting, and water for Freshman Orientations.
- Hosted fall and spring GradFest on campus for graduating seniors. Host two McNeese Official Ring Sales each year.

2018-2019:

- Funded Student Athlete of the Month (\$3,500); Cowboy Camp (\$500); Homecoming Fireworks (\$6,825); Mascot costume (\$3,380); President's First Choice Campaign (\$40,000); Banners Sponsorship (\$2,500); Student Appreciation Lunch (\$400); Lunch for Academic Signing Day (\$3,719.25); Student Social Tables (\$1,000); and 2 athletic fundraisers (\$2,000).
- Sponsored Student Alumni Ambassadors and water for all Freshmen Orientations. Made the Alumni Coke Wagon available to Men's Baseball during construction of their restrooms and concession stand.
- Hosted fall and spring GradFest and two McNeese Ring Sales.

6.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Continue to support campus needs with a focus on students. Continue to work with campus officials and departments for needs assessment. Attend events whenever possible to gauge effectiveness.

2017-2018:

Increased amount of endowed scholarships by \$83,140 from the prior year, thus exceeding the benchmark. Sponsored the Student Athlete of the Month, Banners, and CODOFIL. Provided funding for Homecoming Fireworks, Greek Philanthropy Awards, Cowboy Camp, Admissions & Recruiting, and Freshman Orientation. Provided partial funding for the Social Tables event layout software and purchased season basketball tickets. The alumni staff also plans and staffs GradFest and ring sales each semester.

The Alumni Association will continue to support these programs during the 2018-2019 year and will look for additional opportunities to get involved with the University, including a partnership with the Career and Student Development Center

2018-2019:

Total funding is greater than \$63,824.25. This is larger than anticipated due to the \$40,000 My McNeese campaign. Recommend increasing benchmark to >\$60,000.

7 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: A member of the Alumni staff should be present at a minimum of 10 student events a year.

7.1 Data

2016-2017:

Alumni staff members attended the following: two GradFests; two Welcome Back Days; Academic Signing Day; SGA Banquet; Spring Court Reception; Greek Banquet; Career Fair; Performing Arts Showcase; Undergraduate Research Day; BAC Pizza Party; Cowboy Camp; Student Alumni meeting; Scholarship Brunch; Homecoming Parade set-up; and Golf Banquet.

2017-2018:

Alumni staff members attended numerous student activities throughout the year, including: Greek Banquet, Student Government Banquet, Undergraduate Research Day, Performing Arts Showcase, Juried Student Art Show, Fall & Spring Gradfest, Welcome Back Day in fall and spring, Academic Signing Day, Cowboy Camp, and Student Alumni events. Alumni staff member served as a judge at both the Homecoming poster and singing competitions.

2018-2019:

Staff members attended the Greek Banquet, Student Recognition Dinner, Juried Student Art Show, Fall and Spring Grad Fest, Academic Signing Day, Cowboy Camp and Student Alumni Events, Homecoming Committee Meetings, Peerleader Reunion, Homcoming Court dinner, Scholarship Brunch, Phonathon, two Commencements, Spring Court, and Ring Workshop.

7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Check the campus calendar on the first of each month to see upcoming student events and discuss attendance possibilities at a staff meeting.

2017-2018:

Alumni staff members attended numerous student events during the year that provided us the opportunity to interact with students. By attending these events, students become more aware of the Alumni Association and its purpose. We find that those students who are involved with the Association during their undergraduate study are more likely to join after graduation. The staff will check the campus calendar to view upcoming student events and discuss the possibility of attending.

2018-2019:

Will spearhead a JCPenney SUIT-UP Event in September. Working with campus departments to encourage students to shop one evening after the store closes. Students receive a 30% discount on career dress, shoes, and accessories. Event to be held a couple of weeks prior to Career Fair.

Continue to review campus calendar for student events. Provide MSU Student Alumni with clothing that has their logo for them to wear on-campus. Put McNeese Alumni name on campus video boards for at least four different times of year.

8 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Increase endowed scholarship funds by at least \$50,000 each year.

8.1 Data

Fiscal Year	Endowed scholarships	Increase from previous year
2013-2014	\$497,800	\$40,000
2014-2015	\$527,800	\$30,000
2015-2016	\$665,944	\$138,144
2016-2017	\$817,982.34	\$32,360.35
2017-2018	\$901,122.34	\$83,140
2018-2019	\$948,122.34	\$47,000

8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2018-2019:

Average of past 6 years is \$61,666 annually which exceeds the \$50,000 a year benchmark. Will give greater emphasis in promoting the State License Plate program which helps generate scholarship funds.

Performance Objective 2 Continue to support Undergraduate Research Program.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Provide financial support to the following number of students who will work with a faculty mentor on campus research projects and who will attend the annual Academic Summit:

- Five students to make oral presentations;
- Five students to make poster presentations;
- Five student art exhibits; and
- One performing art performance.

Faculty mentors are encouraged to attend and we will cover their costs.

1.1 Data

Year	Undergraduate research budget
2005	\$10,000
2006	\$9,100
2007	N/A
2008	\$10,000
2009	\$35,000
2010	\$24,475
2011	\$24,416
2012	\$10,531
2013*	\$8,250
2014	\$10,930
2015	\$7,637
2016	\$5,718
2017	\$5,684
Total	\$161,741

*In 2013, McNeese presented at the National Council on Undergraduate Research concerning the Alumni Association sponsorship of the Undergraduate Research program.

Year	Undergraduate research budget	# of students participating in undergraduate research

2018	\$4,685.55	16
2019	\$3,330.64	13 students/10 faculty

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Continue support of this program by providing 100% travel costs for students and faculty mentors to attend the annual statewide Academic Summit held by the University of Louisiana System. This funding is approved by the Alumni Board of Directors each year, so they should be kept engaged so as to realize the value of the program and its impact on students. Effective 2017-2018, the number of students participating in undergraduate research will also be provided.

2017-2018:

Provided 100% of funding for this program by covering all travel, meal, and lodging costs for the students and faculty mentors to attend the annual statewide Academic Summit hosted by the UL System. 16 students and 11 faculty mentors attended the event, which was held in New Orleans, LA, this year.

2018-2019:

Provided 100% funding for this program by covering all travel, meal, and lodging costs for student and faculty mentors to attend the annual statewide Academic Summit hosted by the UL System. This year, 13 McNeese students and 10 faculty mentors attended the event, which was held on the Grambling campus. It is likely that McNeese will host this event in 2021, so I suggest that several McNeese staff members attend the 2020 Summit to assist in their planning for the 2021 event.

Performance Objective 3 Use cost effective ways of communicating with alumni to encourage their support of McNeese; work with campus and community resources to efficiently and effectively support the University mission; and promote the University's mission to alumni, potential students, and community.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Maintain contact with our alumni through the use of printed material and e-communications. Send our monthly e-newsletters and e-mail notices of events when appropriate. Inform alumni of McNeese news, events, and encourage their support of the University.

1.1 Data

Fiscal Year	# of alumni sent printed newsletter
2013-2014	30,000
2014-2015	30,000
2015-2016	31,600
2016-2017	32,070
2017-2018	32,923
2018-2019	33,636

Newsletters, invitations, and solicitations printed:

Fiscal Year	# of printed pieces*
2013-2014	63,029
2014-2015	59,647
2015-2016	57,273
2016-2017	39,394
2017-2018	65,437
2018-2019	66,414

*This does not include donation receipts and daily office correspondence.

E-mails sent out for Happy Birthday, Holiday Greetings, New Graduate Welcome, Event Notices, Campaigns, Chapter News, E-Newsletters, Athletic News, Board Ballots, and Campus Events:

Fiscal Year	# of pieces designed	# of e-mails sent	Open rate	Bounce rate
2016-2017	74	303,673	23%	2%
2017-2018	80	479,192	21%	0.95%
2018-2019	65	257,729	37.1%	.514%

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Continue to use online contacts and forms of giving to reduce mailing costs and provide for more frequent contacts. Work on messaging that makes alumni proud of their alma mater. Make use of roto calls when appropriate. Printed pieces were significantly less this year as we included the non-donor solicitation piece in the alumni newsletter saving postage on 30,000 pieces. It only generated three new donors so we will not do it again this year.

2017-2018

- Increased the number of printed mail pieces due to sending a specific non-donor mail solicitation to over 24,000 alumni, which resulted in 61 new donors this year, a significant increase over the prior year. For the upcoming year, a similar solicitation will be used that will also highlight additional ways for alumni to support the Alumni Association (e.g., by attending athletic events, purchasing the McNeese license plate, buying an official ring, or applying for the McNeese credit card).
- Increased use of online communication and giving forms to reduce mailing cost. By sending pre-solicitation emails, we are able to reduce our fundraising expenses. By sending e-newsletters and e-vites, we are able to decrease mailing and event costs.
- Through data research, we were able to update email addresses and decrease the email bounce rate.

2018-2019:

- Our social outreach was markedly less this year, but the open rate and bounce rate was much improved.
- Will need to find a student intern to assist with social media as existing staff does not have the time required for this on a daily basis.
- The University sends out e-newsletters every week. We provided them with every alumni e-mail address, so we need to review the campus e-news each time, so that we can have fresh content in our e-newsletter and are not copying the campus news 100%.
- Will start campaign to take photos of McNeese signage at local businesses and put on our website to encourage others to visibly support McNeese. This should drive more clicks to our site as people want to see their pictures and their business.
- Will continue with alumni Facebook page.

2 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: At least 2,500 records will be updated each year through Alumni Finder.

2.1 Data

Fiscal Year	# of records submitted	# of records updated	% of records updated
2016-2017	10,525	4,237	41%
2017-2018	16,628	3,392	21%
2018-2019	18,756	7,071	38%

2.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

Of the 10,525 addresses updated, 4,237 were updated through a contact with AlumniFinder. Continue to fund AlumniFinder research until each class year has been updated. Train new student aides in alumni research so that they can update records in Raiser's Edge. Effective 2017-2018, the percentage of records updated during the fiscal year will be provided.

2017-2018

The accuracy of the alumni database was improved by updating records with AlumniFinder. Out of the 16,628 records from the class years of 1982-2001, 2004-2006, and 2009-2015 that were sent to AlumniFinder, 3,392 alumni updates were made.

2018-2019:

We ran the classes of 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017. These 18,756 records were run through AlumniFinder and 7,071 of them were updated. This will allow us to know which classes we should allocate our cost of updating records to as we move forward. We will continue to update individual records from alumni contacts such as events, newsletters, ticket sales, walk-ins, web-site, etc.

Effective 2019-2020, we will strive to update a minimum of 5,000 records per year.