

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%

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.

2 Assessment and Benchmark

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

Benchmark: Will be determined after the first year of data collection.

2.1 Data

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

*# 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.

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

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.

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

Fiscal Year	# of home games	Estimated average attendance per game	Estimated # of Rowdy Card holders per game
2017-2018	5	>1,000	320

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.

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 Boiled Also assisted with the Pi Kappa Phi Reunion, ADPi Reunion, Ag Alumni Crawfish Boil, and Drums & Drafts Band Fundraiser.

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.

6 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Provide planning, staffing, and financial support for scholarships, 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	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
2018-2019	\$901,122.34	\$83,140

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.

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

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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

*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%

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.

2 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: At least 2,500 records should be updated each year.

2.1 Data

Fiscal Year	# of records updated	% of records updated
2016-2017	10,525	N/A
2017-2018	19,242	57%

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, NCOA reports, and staff research. 19,242 alumni address updates were made during the year. Over 15,000 records (from the class years 1982-2001, 2004-2006, and 2009-2015) were researched and 3,392 new address updates were made.

