St. Olaf Alumni Board Meeting Minutes
November 3-4, 2011

Thursday, November 3
(Meeting held in the David E. Johnson Board Room)

Alumni Board Members Present: Brenda Berkman ’73, Kate Bollman Pearce ’01, Nikki Brock-Maruska ’95, Andrea Dittman ’12, Sam Dotzler ’00, Paul Finley ’99, Sandy Skustad Jersted ’66, Kate Sands Johnson ’95, Katherine Kroger ’99, Mitch Lehn ’92, Vijay Mehrotra’86, Brock Metzger ’03, Mildred “Mickey” Matzke Monsen ’49, Gary Perkins ’80, Jennifer Rajala Sawyer ’94, Rebecca Schmidt Taibl ’70, Bruce Wahl ’97, Maggie Wells ’08

Staff Present: Allen Baker, Sheri Eichorn, Tracy Fossum, Lori Middeldorp ’80, Heidi Quiram, Kathy Schuurman, Nathan Soland ’04, Ann Svennungsen, Jen Winterfeldt ‘07

Opening prayer, Rev. Ann Svennungsen, Interim College Pastor
• Rev. Ann opened the meeting with a devotional and prayer and remarks about St. Olaf continuing to be a college of the church.

Founders Day & Alumni Awards announcements, Kathy Schuurman, Associate Director of Alumni & Parent Relations,
• Kathy shared plans for the Founders Day/Alumni Awards experience and discussed ways Alumni Board members can get involved with the process.
• There are 4 Distinctive Awards: Distinguished Service Award, Alumni Achievement Award, Gold Award (Graduate of the Last Decade), Distinguished Alumni Award.
• History: DAA has been an award given by the college for over 50 years but the other awards are more recent. Awards used to be given over Reunion Weekend but are now focused on their own award day held on Founder’s Day.
• Process: nominations are given by classmates, staff, etc. A selection committee goes through to choose winners and then they are notified by the President. At that time, Kathy works with them to prepare them for Founder’s Day proceedings.
• This year the college is awarding 9 alumni with awards.
• The college is trying to promote the Founder’s Day activities thoroughly to the students, staff and faculty to assure there is proper fanfare for these alumni and their awards.

Show & Tell, Alumni Board Members
• All Alumni Board members shared stories, anecdotes, ideas, and reflections on their involvement with St. Olaf in the past six months.
• Some of the common highlights and projects of the Alumni Board Members are
  o Ole Night Out
  o National Day of Service
  o Serving as Class Fund Agents
  o Networking with student and offering networking events in various clubs
  o Area newsletters,
  o Offering “regular” regional events (like book club, dinners, happy hours, etc.)
  o summer send-off events
Admissions Alumni Program

- Common themes of challenges facing Alumni Board Members
  - how to market events without “assaulting” people with emails and information
  - geographical challenges are often one the largest barriers for hosting events in regional clubs
  - Learning how to navigate social media in the regional clubs

Black & Gold Gala Discussion, Jennifer Sawyer ’94 & Brock Metzger ’03

- The 4th Annual, 2012 Black and Gold Gala plans are underway. The event will take place at the Minneapolis Hilton on March 3, 2012. This year’s goal is to raise $200,000 for Annual Giving with 500 people in attendance and $50,000 in sponsorship.
- This year’s event will feature electronic bidding and a new look.
- This year there is an attendance committee in hopes of getting more people in the door.
- Board members should think about how to procure items from you area and bid on items on the online auction. Board members should also think about attending the gala and recruiting people to attend.

Reunion Weekend Review & Preview, Nathan Soland ’04, Director of Alumni & Parent Relations

- Reunion Weekend 2011 went really well. Over 3400 guests attended which set all time attendance records among certain class years.
- Reunion 2012 plans are underway and this year will feature a Cantorei Reunion as well as class reunions.
- It is important and yet exciting for the college to host class years from the 5th to 70th reunions, celebrating together as well as living on campus together.
- It is important for reunion classmates from around the nation to recruit classmates from Northfield and the Twin Cities area to attend as well in an effort to assure that everyone comes back to campus for the reunion.

Christmas Festival Simulcast and You, BJ Johnson, Manager of Music Organizations

- BJ shared a video about the St. Olaf Choir Centennial Reunion which was a wonderful way to highlight the event.
- The Christmas Festival is celebrating 100 years and this year there will be a simulcast on December 4 in cities around the Nation. 35-40 “Ole Theaters” have been selected to enhance the St. Olaf alumni and parent experience where guests can anticipate connecting with other alumni and parents. These Ole Theater cities will also feature a corresponding event either before or after the simulcast. Information on the Simulcast and any related Ole events on the website or by contacting Nathan Soland.
- There will be “pre-view” about the St. Olaf at 2:30 p.m. (CST) and the Christmas Festival will be streamed live at 3:00 p.m. (CST).

Technology & Engagement, Steve Blodgett, Director of Marketing & Communications, Jeff O’Donnell ’02, Director of Broadcast Media/Services and Executive Producer of Sing For Joy,
Joshua Wyatt ’05, Associate Director of Broadcast/Media Services, David Gonnerman’90, Associate Director of Marketing & Communications for Media Relations

- Using social media means “letting go” of control so for a college who is concerned about protecting the reputation and image it is important for St. Olaf to be cautious. Quality control is important for the college.
- Using technology is about engaging individuals therefore the message is more important than the means or medium in how it gets done. We have to remember social media and all other technology are on a continuum that will be constantly changing.
- Any technology usage has to be sustainable.
- It is important to ask yourself what is the added value being created by using a certain technology or social media.
- Institutional social media (like the St. Olaf Facebook page) is about information sharing. Niche groups (like Class or Regional Clubs) are where the college wants to generate dialogue among the participants.
- Jeff reviewed all of the streaming pieces as presented here: [http://stolaf.edu/multimedia/](http://stolaf.edu/multimedia/)
- Josh shared the data usage in regards to streaming. From September 1 – October 31, 2011 over 19,000+ users streamed something from the college site and the average use is 40 minutes. 5% of users came from mobile users making up only 2% of time. 14% of viewers come from computers on campus and the rest of the users come from around the world, including representation from 92 different countries.
- The video presented on the multimedia site is often student video which often helps current students gain useable skills.
- People are inundated with messages so it is important to have a comprehensive approach to getting the message into people’s hands. Social media is just one part of the approach to getting the message out.
- The St. Olaf staff has found that general trends about use of Facebook and other media doesn’t necessarily fit into what St. Olaf needs.
- How does the college support clubs in supporting social media pages? Clubs need help about what makes a good social media element and what are elements to avoid. Additionally, clubs would like a plan that says how and when and what messages will go out the area clubs.
- Board members wonder if there could be elements of the college’s technology that are used for “listening” to get feedback from alumni, parents, and students.

Board meeting ended at 6:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4: FOUNDERS DAY (Meeting held in David E. Johnson Board Room)

Alumni Board Members Present: Randy Betcher ’79, Brenda Berkman ’73, Kate Bollman Pearce ’01, Nikki Brock-Maruska ’95, Andrea Dittman ’12, Sam Dotzler ’00, Paul Finley ’99, Sandy Skustad Jersted ’66, Kate Sands Johnson ’95, Katherine Kroger ’99, Mitch Lehn ’92, Vijay Mehrotra ’86, Mildred “Mickey” Matzke Monsen ’49, Gary Perkins ’80, Jennifer Rajala Sawyer ’94, Rebecca Schmidt Taibl ’70, Bruce Wahl ’97, Maggie Wells ’08

Staff Present: Matt Fedde ’06, Tracy Fossum, Lori Middeldorp ’80, Heidi Quiram, Nathan Soland ’04, Eric Tvedt ’08, Jen Winterfeldt ’07

**Student Alumni Association (SAA) report**, Andrea Dittmann ’12, SAA Coordinator
- Andrea ran through the events coordinated by SAA (Golden Medallion Hunt, Cider Hospitality Tent during Homecoming, Ole Night Out, Give to the Max Day which will be held Wednesday, November 16, etc.).
- Andrea also updated the board on the latest news from student life and the events exciting students this fall including the Fall Concert, Diwali celebration, sports updates, the King and Queen of Norway visit, music organization updates, CEL’s Career Network for Oles, etc.
- The group used this opportunity to explore how to use students in maintaining and updating regional Facebook pages. Please contact Andrea (dittmana@stolaf.edu) if you have ideas on how to do this in your area.

**Diversity Discussion**, Bruce King, Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Diversity
- Bruce is the Chief Diversity Office for the college, working to retain faculty, staff, and students from diverse backgrounds.
- Bruce talked about the difference between diversity composed of students from international locations vs. diversity among U.S. students.
- Definition of diversity has to be fluid because what the college is attempting to do is create a culture that is welcoming and inclusive. But when talking about the college’s efforts in regards to diversity it is specifically talking about the effort to increase the amount of students from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Currently 12% of student body is comprised of students who are domestically diverse which is up from 3% 10-12 years ago. That number is primarily made up of Southeast Asian students and African students. 14% of the faculty is non-white which is up 6% in the last 5 years. 7% of the staff is considered diverse. Where should St. Olaf be on the national stage? 22-23% of students, 15-20% of faculty and everyone seems to be struggling on recruiting staff members who are diverse.
- Diversity is large part of the new strategic plan so it is current focus of the college. A large part of the outreach for students is focusing on primary urban centers in the United States.
- Bruce talked about the college’s “606 Project” which focuses on diversity recruitment in Chicago. This project focuses on the relationship model to really support students and make them successful. Through funding from a St. Olaf parent, the college has been able to buy time from the Chicago Admissions counselor, to make more trips to the Chicago area, and to have a Chicago St. Olaf bus trip which is bringing 50+
students and counselors to campus for a weekend. The college is hoping to expand this model to other urban areas around the country.

- Through this relationship based model, there is a lot of potential about thoughtfully engaging alumni in the recruitment of students. All ideas about diversity and new initiatives are welcome.

**Social Media Follow-up**

- There is the agreement that any way of getting people connecting and talking is good so all technology and social media strategies are encouraged.
- There is the belief that synergy with students is important in regards to social media.
- There is interest in having a broader Alumni Engagement Plan with an intentional strategy. Sam Dotzler is willing to work on. This will be shaped like a strategic plan with goals and benchmarks to assure that work can be accomplished.
- Before the next board meeting think about the ways you interact with St. Olaf right now. How do you share that message with your community? Pay attention to the other communities you are part of and what ways are they successful in getting their message out.
- Board members want direction and tools and tips about how to use social media in a strategic way.

**Working Lunch: Enrollment & Financial Aid Discussion**, Michael Kyle ’85, Vice President & Dean of Enrollment

- Michael discussed the Class of 2015 and the strategic way Admissions is coordinated at St. Olaf College. Michael also talked about the emerging Alumni/Admissions Program.

**Tour of Alumni Center**

- The group explored the building(s) that now house Advancement & College Relations and met people who comprise the division.

**The St. Olaf Fund: Your Gift. Your Way.**, Randy Betcher ’79, Chair of the St. Olaf Fund Board

- The St. Olaf Fund now allows for people to specify where their gift can go to reflect their giving passions. The St. Olaf experience, that emotional connection to the college, is enhanced by the annual fund.
- This year’s goal is 31% participation, raising 4.1 million dollars.

Meeting concluded to allow participation in Founder’s Day and Alumni Award celebration.