THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Present: Ben Baker ’09, Nikki Brock-Maruska ’95, Sam Dotzler ’00, Paul Finley ’99, Amy Gillespie ’88, Kate Sands Johnson ’95, Vijay Mehrotra ’86, Brock Metzger ’03, Kate Pearce ’01, Ron Pechauer ’59, Rebecca Taibl ’70, Karl Uri ’99, Lisa Warren ’86, Bailey Williams ’16

Absent: Greta Fure ’09, Sandy Jerstad ’66, Jennifer Sawyer ’94

Visitors for at least a portion of the day: Randy Betcher ’79 (Annual Fund Board Chair), Tracy Fossum (Director of the Annual Fund), Brad Hoff ’89 (Director of Engagement and Alumni and Parent Relations), Matt Marohl (Campus Pastor), Jeff McLaughlin ’92 (Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid) Heidi Quiam (Associate Director of Alumni and Parent Relations), Jen Winterfeldt ’07 (Assistant Director of Alumni and Parent Relations)

The meeting was called to order by board president Kate Pearce. Opening Devotions were given by Rev. Matt Marohl, Campus Pastor. Each member introduced themselves, the area they represent, and shared one memory of their first year at St. Olaf.

Admissions Update – Jeff McLaughlin ’92, Dean of Admissions & Financial Aid

Overarching Admissions Goals for 2013:
- improve per-student revenue
- increase domestic geographic diversity by at least 1%
- enroll 775 students
- maintain existing academic profile
- increase geographic diversity
- maintain current level of international diversity

2013 review:
- increased domestic diversity from 16.4% in 2012 to 17.0%
- 756 students were enrolled
- maintained academic profile (29 median ACT, 1310 SAT)
- increased geographic diversity (41% of students are from MN, which is the lowest since the 1940s, and all 50 states are represented)
- maintained international diversity (6.9% of students, from 77 countries)

All incoming students take a survey about their perceptions of St. Olaf. The top five qualities from these student surveys are friendly, intellectual, highly respected, comfortable and challenging. The bottom five qualities are back-up school, athletics, average, overrated, partying.

In 2013, 87% of admitted students said St. Olaf was their top choice.

Alumni-Admissions Collaboration:
- In progress (or complete):
  - Legacy mailing initiative, admissions staff planning, Raiser’s Edge training for admissions staff (in November), teacher/school employee outreach (December/January)
- In planning:
  - “Outcomes” sessions at on-campus events (March/April), outreach calls (April), pastor/youth minister outreach (May), long-term planning for volunteers (Summer 2014)
St. Olaf Alumni Board Meeting Minutes
November 2013

St. Olaf Fund Board Update – Randy Betcher ’79, St. Olaf Fund Board Chair
FY14 numbers so far:

- The annual fund participation rate is down but the total dollars given has increased from the same point as last year. Some of that may be attributed to when class letters went out. With the conversion to a new database (called Raiser’s Edge), we are behind a bit behind this year.
- A very positive occurrence is that parent giving has gone up 420% from last year. This includes both current and former non-alumni parents.
- Dollar goal for this year is $4.5 million (last year was $4.3 million).
- Last year’s 25th reunion broke a record, raising just over $1.2 million.

Annual Fund Goals for FY14:

- Focus on LYBUNTS (last year but unfortunately not this year). Emphasis is not on more money, rather more people.
- St. Olaf not the only college whose participation rates have shown a reduction in recent years.
- Main goal: we need to re-engage our alumni and make the case that the college is a relevant and meaningful place for them and communicate that we see them as more than a checkbook.

What can alumni board members do?

- Talk about St. Olaf, talk about your own support of St. Olaf.
- Pledge! We’d like to start with alumni board at 100% participation.
- Connect your networks to annual giving.

Give to the Max Day

- This has been successful for St. Olaf but college costs have gone up due to increased fees charged by GiveMN. Even after factoring “prizes” that can be earned from GiveMN, our overall revenue is lower.
- We are choosing to participate because our alumni are excited about the program, however we may reevaluate after this next year.
- We encourage donors to give directly to St. Olaf rather than through GiveMN because the college receives more money.

Your gift, your way

- It’s our responsibility to recognize and thank donors who give any amount, in any form, to the college.
- We still encourage people to support the operating budget and any of the college’s priorities within it, but if a donor has a passion about a certain endeavor, we fully embrace that and want to recognize and be grateful for that passion.
- Whether you give $10 or $10k, you’re invested, you’re engaged, you’re given the same stake in the institution, every donor is important, every donation is important.

Setting the Stage – Brad Hoff ’89, Director of Engagement and Alumni and Relations
Brad thanked the board for the “homework” that board members completed prior to the meeting, and set the stage for the alumni board’s breakout groups by addressing the following:

- Clubs - how do we structure regional clubs or chapters with specific volunteer roles to make the chapters more sustainable?
- Awards – how can we streamline the nominating process while still maintaining the importance of receiving an alumni award?
- Role of the Alumni Board – how can we define the menu of roles that alumni board members can commit to and how do we define success?
Working Groups Session 1
Board members divided into three working groups: Clubs/Chapters, Alumni Awards, and Alumni Board Role.

The group convened for dinner in the King’s Dining Room with presentations by SAA coordinator, Bailey Williams, and student Ginny Larson.

The meeting concluded after dinner.

Friday, November 8
Founders Day

Present: Ben Baker ’09, Nikki Brock-Maruska ’95, Sam Dotzler ’00, Paul Finley ’99, Amy Gillespie ’88, Kate Sands Johnson ’95, Vijay Mehrotra ’86, Brock Metzger ’03, Kate Pearce ’01, Ron Pechauer ’59, Rebecca Taibl ’70, Karl Uri ’99, Lisa Warren ’86, Bailey Williams ’16

Absent: Greta Fure ’09, Sandy Jerstad ’66, Jennifer Sawyer ’94

Visitors for at least a portion of the day: Branden Grimmet ’03 (Director of the Piper Center for Vocation and Career), Brad Hoff ’89 (Director of Engagement and Alumni and Parent Relations), Heidi Quiram (Associate Director of Alumni and Parent Relations), Jen Winterfeldt ’07 (Assistant Director of Alumni and Parent Relations)

Working Groups Session 2
Groups broke out and continued discussion on Club/Chapters, Awards, and the Role of the Alumni Board.

Piper Center Update – Branden Grimmet ’03, Director of the Piper Center for Vocation and Career
Branden started by passing out copies of the Annual Report to all board members.

Ways in which alumni interact with students (more information on each of these initiatives can be found on the Piper Center web site: http://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/)

- Career Network for Oles: 1,236 alumni and parent volunteers
- Logins to Ole Career Central: 272 alumni logins
- Ole Biz and Ole Law: 208 alumni and parent attendees
- Connections Programs: 172 alumni and parent participants
- Career Coaching Appointments: 95 alumni appointments (79 unique alumni)
- New program: Alumni in Residence. We have a lot of local alumni who can advise students on various career paths such as Ministry, Ventures and Investments, Public Health, Museum Administration, Nonprofit Management, Marketing and Advertising, Entrepreneurship, Communications, International Business, Banking. This would be a good fit for alumni board members, who know when they’re scheduled to return. Alumni Board members suggested Retail (Target, General Mills, Cargill, etc.) as an additional category.

A new program was added to the “Ole Suite” this year: Ole Med (in addition to existing Ole Biz and Ole Law). Ole Med is an event we can potentially expand in the future to include different subsets such as dentistry or health care administration.
Connections Programs: take place over fall, Interim, and spring breaks. Deliberately work to make them interdisciplinary, which benefits both alumni and students. Ben shared that, in New York, many alumni who were not involved in the typical club world were involved in this program. Sam was impressed with the preparation by the students, who seemed so far beyond where he was himself at that point in time. Students naturally benefit from seeing a St. Olaf degree in action and what it means to be a St. Olaf alum. Upcoming cities include New York, Denver, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and Chicago.

Branden shared who Piper Center staff are. See http://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/meet-the-staff/. Most colleges of our size have about double the permanent staff, so we rely heavily on students.

The Alumni Board can help in many ways:
- Connections trips – identify alumni in your chapter who can be a liaison to Piper Center staff (a “go-to” person in that city); orient students to the city; engage alumni volunteers who have interesting career paths; recommend venues, attractions, neighborhoods to visit; communicate regularly with the Piper Center. Branden will share itineraries of previous trips so board members can see what a trip looks like.
- Alumni in Residence – identify to Piper Center staff alumni who are returning to campus; recommend speakers to engage.
- Other opportunities – share your personal network; consider recruiting an Ole for internships, jobs, research; volunteer as a mentor.
- Mentoring v. Networking: Alumni tend to desire a mentoring opportunity, which usually means a longer, deeper relationship. Students often look for shorter term assistance or connections. Piper Center staff are interested in aligning these desires. Student numbers are dwindling on the Career Network program and many alumni are not feeling satisfied with the encounters. The Piper Center will rework this program.

What the Piper Center needs from Alumni:
- Commitment to do what you say you’ll do.
- Demonstrated interest in students (not every alum wants to be engaged in this way – that’s OK)
- Thoughtful, prepared advice and guidance.
- Do your homework – engage constructively with the college (model positivity as opposed to attacking critically), know what’s going on with the current mission and strategy.
- Be a Career Liaison: super-connector who can engage young and old alumni, motivate volunteers, serve as a local facilitator, and take responsibility for the professional development of alumni in a region.
- Be a Recent Grad Ambassador – perhaps two people per city who would welcome graduating seniors to the region, offer relocation guidance and support, demonstrate radical hospitality
  - Recent alums have conveyed the need to welcome new grads to a region. Ideas were floated to create an event in major cities linked to Homecoming (“Can’t go home to the hill? Come to the local event”) or perhaps add this message to send-off picnics.

The group broke to attend the alumni award luncheon honoring Dr. Diane Havlir ’80.
All Board Working Group Report Out

Alumni Awards Discussion and Recommendations
Why:
- We’re not getting enough nominations, we think primarily because (1) the process is difficult and (2) the awards may not be defined as clearly as they need to be.

The work group suggests keeping these awards:
- Distinguished Alumni Award – all-around distinguished alum, “crème de la crème,” perhaps isn’t awarded every year because of the high level necessary to achieve it.
- Alumni Achievement Award – high achievement in a profession.
- Distinguished Service Award, but change name to Outstanding Service Award and elevate the qualifications required – goes to alumni, parents and friends who have done outstanding work serving their community or St. Olaf
  - Confer the above mentioned awards as in the fall – either opening convocation, Homecoming, or Founder’s Day, with a preference for Founder’s Day
- Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) – keep but suggest changing timing to awarding at Commencement; research shows that other colleges do this; a way to show graduating seniors what’s possible in the immediate future.

Potentially add this award:
- Spirit of St. Olaf Award – propose that this award be conferred during reunion year, during Convocation or class reunion luncheon; nominees identified by Advancement Division staff; level of attention to this award not as high as those conferred in the fall (i.e., more simple ceremony).

Change the process:
- Get the nomination form online – keep it simple: bullet points as to why this person is deserving, ask for professional credentials and references (example: Colorado College); nominator does not determine which award they are nominating.
- Auto response generated upon completed submission.
- Two alumni board volunteers receive the nominations and put them into three categories: yes, no, maybe.
- Send “yes” nominations to student workers to do preliminary research and put together a one-page summary sheet.
- Decide which nominees to alert and obtain more information; and decide which nominators to alert that your nominee is not being considered this year, but will be kept in the process; and respond to “no” group.
- Send to selection committee made up of:
  - Director of Alumni Relations
  - 1 Alumni Office team member
  - The 2 Alumni board volunteers who reviewed nominations
  - 2 Board of Regents representatives
  - 2 professors from different fields
  - Any alumni board rep who wishes to be part of the discussion
- Make sure language is inserted in each award description that the alumni achievements must reflect the values and mission of St. Olaf.
- Try to balance awards by gender/class year/geographic region/variety of professions - however, do not disqualify someone during a given year just because a particular category is over represented.
Discussion included:
- Whether to notify the nominee.
- Whether to keep a nomination in consideration for more than one year.
- Elevating the awards and making sure the level of qualification is kept high; would be nice to provide examples of a winner in each category as a model to reach each year.

Rebecca, Karl and Kate Pearce will put together the plan going forward and submit no later than January 15, 2014.

Role of Board Member Discussion and Recommendations
Why are we here? What is expected of us? What is the mission and expectation of the board?

Mission (tweaked from an existing statement, and shortened for the minutes)
- Nurture relationship between the college and its alumni, parents and friends by being advocates, educators and connectors

Requirements for Alumni Board membership:
- Contribute annually to the St. Olaf Fund.
- Attend meetings on campus.
- Ensure ongoing work between meetings is completed to continue forward momentum.
- Attend and participate in your class reunion activities.
- Support success of Black and Gold Gala by actively (if you cannot attend, then recruit attendees or volunteers, solicit donations, or donate an item).
- Be an active participant in local/chapter activities.
- Exercise loyalty and positivity towards the Alumni Board and the College.
- Act as a positive ambassador for the College.

Strategies:
- Connect
  - Use personal networks – live or electronic – to inform community of St. Olaf events
  - Attend something quarterly regarding career connections/job networking, e.g., a Piper Connections event in your area, recent grad ambassador, etc.
  - Attend local events
  - Mentor current students
  - Be available to alumni via the online directory for networking and professional development
- Educate
  - Inform your own networks of current news from the college
  - Inform community of changes to campus, news from campus, and other important information
  - Help at St. Olaf on the Road events
  - Spread the word about local activity; call 5 people to attend local events
- Advocate
  - Awards
  - Job networks
  - Career Network for Oles
  - Recruit for admissions, alumni to events, within congregations
  - Fundraising as a class fund agent, writing class letter, involvement in Gala
  - Reunions
  - Stewardship
The working group discussed and proposed some tactics, the menu of tasks each board member can take on to fulfill their mission/role. Full menu still needs to be filled in. Idea is that between all the board members, all of the tasks would be covered.

Next steps:
- Develop strategic approach to alumni engagement
- Prepare staffing, budget and scale
- Flush out tactics
- Map tactics and efforts over calendar, balancing feasibility, staff resources, and costs
- Define key performance indicators
- Launch the plan
- Calculate measurement of success

Discussion included:
- Adding the word engagement to the mission statement
- Providing tools to board members to carry out their tasks
- Identifying campus partners to advise on each task/area of focus

Sam and Kate Johnson will put together the plan going forward and submit it by December 15, 2013.

Chapter Discussion and Recommendations
Purpose: define an official structure for our major market cities (formerly called clubs, now called chapters). At this time, did not consider secondary markets such as Milwaukee or Madison. In addition, recognized that the Twin Cities presents a unique situation.

Looked at research and identified several themes:
- Many similarities across other schools
- Different approach for different sized regions
- Dues? Don’t!
- Chapter structure is important to effectively leverage limited staff resources

Crucial pieces of proposed chapter structure:
- Local leaders
  - Research showed that active alumni engagement in a given area is driven by a few key leaders
  - Chair and Co-Chair system – want to avoid a chapter revolving around only one person, who may get burned out; staggered two year terms
  - Need further discussion on recruiting these key volunteers, choose with care
  - Need to clearly define roles and the scope of commitment (e.g., role of a co-chair would be to help facilitate planning of events and “nagging” event leaders to execute their promise)
- Steering committee – committed group of volunteers on a secondary level
  - Active volunteers
  - Again, need to clearly define roles
  - Requirement to own an event or a major role (e.g., liaison to Piper Center Connections Program)
  - Develop a volunteer appreciation program
- Annual planning process
Meet once a year with the Alumni Staff liaison, usually in the summer, to discuss both college-sponsored events as well as “organically generated” events for the year.

Current plan is to do fewer events well, rather than multiple not-well-attended events that are un-supported by volunteers in the area.

- Select the co-chairs in advance

- Staff support
  - Vital to planning process
  - Lead college-generated events (e.g., St. Olaf on the Road, Piper Center Connections)
  - Support volunteer-led events (e.g., theater event, Denver Care Packaging)
  - Manage living library of “Events in a Box”
  - Lean on local steering committee

Next steps:
- Reconfirm the cities with critical mass and/or strategic priority
- Document the role descriptions and responsibilities
  - Chapter
  - Chair, Co-Chair
  - Steering Committee Members
  - Use information already in place at other schools
- Recruit key leaders and steering committee members
- Initiate living library of events

Discussion included:
- Paying for/underwriting events
- How do the Twin Cities fit into this model

Vijay, Ron, Ben and Amy will put together the plan going forward and submit it by January 15, 2014. After some initial documents are in place for next steps, a sub-committee will brainstorm on this issue in the Twin Cities.

All plans on the above working groups should be sent to Brad Hoff at hoff@stolaf.edu.

Wrap-up
Date of next meeting: April 10–11, 2014.