

Alumni Volunteer Toolkit
Cal Aggie Alumni Association
2015

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MISSION STATEMENT

“To enrich the lives of alumni, students, families
and friends worldwide, and develop lifelong
ambassadors for UC Davis.”

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Dear Fellow Aggie,

Welcome to the Cal Aggie Alumni Association's (CAAA) chapter toolkit. Thank you for the time and effort you contribute to our association and the University. To assist you in your volunteer efforts, CAAA has developed this resource manual for your reference. Our goal is for the chapter toolkit to remain a living document that will evolve over time, through your thoughts and feedback, to better serve the needs of future Aggie volunteers.

Alumni engagement is important for many reasons. It furthers the mission of the University and can contribute to the personal and professional wellbeing of our graduate pool. Above all, alumni preserve the traditions that make our campus unique and carry the UC Davis message back to their communities.

CAAA relies on our volunteers to represent us and the university at the local level. You help the University stay connected to our alumni and ensure that our support remains relevant and effective. Our hope is that this packet will help keep you involved and will encourage prospective volunteers to reconnect with UC Davis.

The role of the alumni association is to serve as a support for you and your alumni group. In working to reduce barriers to participation, and providing this chapter toolkit we are working to empower you as a volunteer, encourage your participation, and support your creativity. Supporting our alumni not only furthers the mission of the University but also contributes to the growing size and stature of the Aggie Family.

Alumni are our most important resource; I am eager to hear your thoughts and learn how CAAA can better serve you as your alumni association. CAAA looks forward to serving you and sharing in your group's future successes.

Sincerely,

Richard Engel '90, Cred. '91
Executive Director, Cal Aggie Alumni Association



Starting an alumni network is easy. Many of our most successful networks and chapters have started with a few key volunteers and a good idea. To start a chapter or network, please follow the steps below.

ESTABLISHING AN ALUMNI GROUP

How to Get Started

1. **Contact a CAAA liaison:** Whether the group you wish to establish is regionally based or organized around a common interest, CAAA has a staff person to help you. Please visit www.alumni.ucdavis.edu to find the appropriate contact person.
2. **Volunteer to lead:** Agree to serve as a public contact for the chapter or network. Please see additional requirements under “Minimum Requirements to be a Volunteer Leader”.
3. **Research:** A programs officer will research -the group’s viability by searching CAAA’s database to determine the number of alumni in the region or with the specified affinity. The officer will let you know the group meets the minimum requirement of having at least 500 alumni within a 50 mile radius of the central location.
4. **Survey:** Once CAAA determines the pool of alumni for a given area or affiliation, we will send a survey to this pool to gauge interest. From these responses we will recruit volunteer leaders that will serve as the initial steering committee to the new group.
5. **Launch:** After bringing these elements together, we will help you develop a “launch” event to engage and reconnect with other interested alumni.

Minimum Requirements to be a Volunteer Leader

- Must be a current CAAA member.
- Commit to at least two - three events per year for a Network and four events minimum for a Chapter. Generally this entails one or two hours a week in the months leading up to the event.
- Volunteers provide contact information that is published on our website and occasionally in chapter/network materials.
- Manage all Chapter or Network social media sites, including LinkedIn and Facebook pages.

CAAA recognizes that our volunteers have many demands on their time; as such, CAAA will never ask a volunteer to give any more time than they are comfortable with. Our staff work to support volunteers in ways that reduce the burden for those that are giving their time. Getting involved is far less daunting than you might assume.

“Alumni volunteers have options. Choose a chapter or network model to bring alumni together.”

ESTABLISHING AN ALUMNI GROUP

Chapter vs. Network

Chapters

A chapter is a formally registered group of alumni. Each chapter has a mission, a leadership committee and a set of by-laws. Before pursuing any other goal or objective, a chapter’s purpose is to bring alumni together to connect with each other and reconnect with the campus. There aren’t any fees to become a chapter, but there is an annual registration process that coincides with the start of each fiscal year. Annual registration requires that volunteers submit a roster of chapter officers, a calendar of events for the year and a budget for each event. Chapters are required to hold one educational, one social and one service event per year.

Because of their organization, chapters have the ability to operate autonomously. Within the parameters set forth by CAAA’s by-laws, chapters are able to open and manage their own bank accounts and take charge of their own programming. Large-scale decisions (budgeting, e-mail invitations, etc) still run through CAAA. Many of our more established groups opt for the chapter approach precisely because of the autonomy that it affords. Networks with large and/or active alumni populations can transition to the chapter format.

Network

A network is a collection of alumni that come together to engage with other UC Davis alumni and reconnect with the university. Like chapters, networks are organized around a region or common interest allowing alumni to meet in settings as varied as happy hour socials, networking nights, and community service events.

As a less formal alternative to the chapter model, networks are convenient for new alumni groups because they are neither required to submit annual registration documents, nor to have an organized leadership structure (e.g. president, vice president, secretary, etc.) Since there is less paperwork, there is also less autonomy. Networks do not open or manage bank accounts. Additionally, a network’s programming calendar is organized in conjunction with a CAAA staff member.

Many of our newer groups opt for this network approach because it allows them to focus their energies on organizing and starting a group instead of fulfilling the obligations and paperwork associated with the chapter model. Networks allow alumni volunteers to spend more of their energy creatively, driving programming through their ideas and insights. Volunteers can establish a network for newer, smaller or less active groups of alumni.

Chapter Examples

African and African American Alumni Association (AAAAA)

Cal Aggie Marching Band Alumni Association (CAMBAA)

San Diego Aggies

Network Examples

UC Davis Rugby Alumni Network

New York Alumni Network

Boston Alumni Network

“All groups are organized around one of two commonalities: location and affinity.”

ESTABLISHING AN ALUMNI GROUP

Regional vs. Special Interest

Regional Programs

Regional chapters and networks connect alumni from a specific region depending on the size and density of the alumni population. Currently, CAAA has regional groups across California and the nation. As of 2014 we have 22 regional networks and chapters and with the addition of our International Programs have over 20 international regions. For a complete list of these regional groups, visit www.alumni.ucdavis.edu.

Special Interest Programs

Special Interest chapters and networks connect alumni based on a common interest or affinity. Many of our groups stem from common participation in a club or identification with a specific cultural group. These groups are also listed at www.alumni.ucdavis.edu.

Strategies for Success

1. **Start early:** Coordinating resources among volunteers and university staff takes time. Begin planning early to maximize all available opportunities.
2. **Communicate:** CAAA staff wants to help you succeed. Bring questions and ideas to staff and other volunteers for feedback. CAAA recognizes that you have other obligations. Accordingly, we hesitate to make unnecessary demands on your time. By speaking with a CAAA staff person well in advance, we can find ways to work efficiently to support you in your volunteer efforts while ensuring that we meet appropriate deadlines.
3. **Reach out:** Volunteer leaders have a Facebook group and listserv where they share ideas, tips and experiences. Find and talk to other volunteer leaders to see what has worked, what is being planned and what to avoid. For more information on the Facebook group contact a member of the CAAA programs team.
4. **Have fun:** Planning events takes time and effort, but volunteering should be rewarding and fun. CAAA staff will help ease the burden of planning an event; make sure you take the time to enjoy yourself and the company of your fellow alumni or your chapter.
5. **Budget enough time and start small:** Alumni have the best of intentions when starting a group, but can easily find themselves overwhelmed. Talk to CAAA staff members and other volunteers to see how much time planning an event will take. Launch events are often small-scale endeavors. Groups take time to develop and grow; don't try to do everything all at once.
6. **Pay attention to the pennies:** As a non-profit organization, the Cal Aggie Alumni Association must use its resources wisely. All of our events operate on a **zero-based budget**. For the long term health of each network, chapter and the organization as a whole, we ask our alumni volunteers to work with CAAA staff to produce reasonable budgets that accomplish these goals.

ESTABLISHING AN ALUMNI GROUP

Active and Inactive Chapter Designations

Active Chapters

To be active, a chapter must do the following

- Select/identify at least two chapter officers
- Hold at least one general meeting per year that is open to all members of the chapter
- Each chapter must hold at least 4, and each network must hold 2-3 events per year that are open to all graduates, former or current students, or friends of the campus who have demonstrated an interest in this chapter. These events should include but are not limited to, social gathering, an event with an educational component, and a community service opportunity.

For CAAA to ensure that a chapter is active, the chapter must submit a completed registration form by the registration deadline. The registration form serves as the documentation necessary to ensure the chapter meets all relevant legal and policy obligations and enables CAAA to determine what level of support a chapter may require. Late forms will be accepted; however, due to the need to determine support requirements for all chapters, late forms may result in forfeiture of some or all CAAA support.

Inactive Chapters

Inactive chapters are those chapters that have not met the criteria to be active chapters or have consistently failed to meet criteria.

ESTABLISHING AN ALUMNI GROUP

Conclusion

Being part of the alumni association is supposed to be fun. CAAA staff are here to help make your ideas a reality. To this end we will work to make the process of establishing a chapter or network as clear and easy as possible. We encourage our alumni to get involved, to share their ideas, and to contribute to their community and their university. Most importantly though, we want our alumni to remember the reasons why they are proud to be UC Davis graduates.

PROGRAMS

Introduction

For an organization whose aim is to connect alumni to each other and the university, it is important to provide opportunities for our graduates to socialize. CAAA can only engage alumni with the help of dedicated volunteers, who know their constituencies - regional or special interest - best. Your help is essential if we are to provide the type of programming that successfully connects our graduates after their time in Davis. At its core, these events are the reason we work to connect alumni. They are fun, useful, and exciting ways of meeting new people, reliving past memories, and exchanging ideas and resources for the benefit of our university and its graduates.

Volunteers are not expected to plan events alone. CAAA has many resources to help put your ideas into practice. Every event begins with an idea and ends with a coordinated marketing effort. Your knowledge of your community, whether it is the place in which you live, or the network of alumni with whom you stay in touch, is our most valuable resource. It is what we ask our volunteers to provide and the means by which we can make our programming fun and useful for you and the rest of our alumni base. First and foremost, we want our volunteers to enjoy themselves.

For chapters, we ask that you hold one social, one educational and one service event each year. Networks are under no such obligation and will coordinate their calendar of events with a CAAA staff member. Initial planning with a view toward the long-term and the ability to always offer a follow-up event, is fundamental to retaining engaged alumni. Here are some resources and ideas to help you think about alumni programming for your community.

“Volunteers are not expected to plan events alone. CAAA has many resources to help put your ideas into practice.”

PROGRAMS

Ideas: Athletics

Aggie Watch Parties

Now that UC Davis athletics competes in Division I, Aggie sports teams will receive more television exposure. When these opportunities arise, organize fellow UC Davis alumni, show your Aggie Pride and cheer on UC Davis athletes as they compete at the highest level.

Locations: restaurants, sports bars, etc.

Watch party audiences are usually very diverse, from families to older alumni. These events tend to work with groups of all sizes. If the venue is family friendly, be sure to make note of it in event advertisements.

Area sporting events

Professional sports teams usually accommodate alumni groups with ticket discounts and group seating. Contact local major and minor league sports teams (e.g. Sacramento River Cats, Oakland A's, Sacramento Kings, etc.) for possible and on-going promotions. Depending on game time, meet at a local restaurant or bar before the game. Prefer to stay outdoors? Break out the barbecue and tailgate in the parking lot. Be inclusive by allowing guests to bring their own food.

Coordinate with CAAA staff to purchase tickets. When given the option group leaders should have alumni purchase tickets directly from the team vendor. CAAA can purchase a block of tickets on behalf of the chapter or network and sell them directly to alumni via our website. When CAAA purchases tickets, chapter leaders actively promote and advertise the event so the chapter recoups its investment. Any purchase is subject to CAAA approval. Group leaders should never purchase tickets without first speaking and agreeing to terms with CAAA staff.

www.ucdavisaggies.com

Check the UC Davis Athletics website to see when Aggie sports teams are televised.

- Tailgating allows alumni to be social and enjoy the weather.
- Sporting events work well for groups of all sizes and ages.

PROGRAMS

Ideas: Arts & Family

Museums/Zoos/Farmer's Markets

Museums, zoos and parks are great venues for family oriented events. Choose a weekend date that accommodates parents and their children. Special events and occasions at local museums and zoos generate greater interest and help advertise the event. Plan an outing around a theme or occasion to attract a wide array of alumni.

Check with museums or zoos in your area for special group rates. Come together at some point during the event so members and families can mingle free of docents or guides. Zoos often have picnic or barbecue areas that are convenient for group gatherings while museums generally have a café or restaurant where groups can meet for lunch. Meet first, identify fellow alumni and have a great day.

Art events

Theatre, music and dance performances engage alumni with differing interests. Add cultural events to your programming calendar for variety and outreach.

- Choose a weekend date for families and children.
- Cultural events can provide variety and engage new and different alumni.
- During an event, always set aside time to socialize without the structure of a tour.

Ideas: Food & Drink

Wine tasting/brewery tour

Where there's a winery there is usually an Aggie. Wine mixers and tastings are a fun, relaxing way to mingle and network with alumni. Many wineries offer free wine tastings during the week making them affordable options in a bad economy. CAAA staff can help you identify alumni vintners and wine program members in your area. To see a list of wineries that actively participate in our UC Davis Alumni Wine Program, please visit www.alumni.ucdavis.edu/wine.

Cooking Classes/Restaurants

Contact area junior colleges and culinary schools for group cooking classes. Reserve a class or session for CAAA members only. Start a dinner club by organizing alumni to try new restaurants on a regular basis. These are great ways to discover what your community has to offer. Consider holding a monthly happy hour event for younger professional alumni. Meeting in the same establishment consistently can help start an easily maintained routine while changing locations can keep local get-togethers fresh and exciting. Organize a chapter blog where members can contribute their ideas and opinions so new Aggies to the area can learn about the group and the local food scene.

- Find alumni vintners in your area with the help of CAAA staff.
- Be sure to promote your event on your chapter Facebook page.
- Try happy hour events for recent graduates and young professionals.

PROGRAMS

Ideas: Free Events & Services

Free and low cost events

The goal of every event is to foster interpersonal interaction among alumni. While venue and theme should be important considerations, the primary objective is to connect UC Davis alumni with each other in a fun, enjoyable way. There are plenty of opportunities to hold free or low cost events where alumni can reconnect while exploring new areas of interest. Community service, hiking and bike rides are just a few of the low -cost or free options available to alumni groups. Outdoor activities are a great way to explore your area, attract new alumni and save money.

Community Service

Chapters and networks try to hold at least one community service event per year. Many alumni already volunteer within their community and enjoy finding like-minded alumni who share their spirit of service. Check your area for soup kitchens, homeless shelters or environmental clean-ups for service opportunities. In addition, many national organizations have local offices that are constantly looking for volunteer help. Below is a list of national organizations supported through grass-root volunteer efforts. Many towns and counties have community clean-up days or allow organizations to "adopt-a-road." Participating as a group for local walk-a-thons or similar charity events is another great way to represent the Aggie Family and give back to the community.

E.g.: Orange County: Bolsa Chica Hike Members of the Orange County chapter came together for a morning in the area's wetlands. Home to many endangered bird and plant species, UC Davis alumni explored and discovered nature in their own backyard. Volunteers contributed 5-10 hours of planning prior to the event.

- Hold a service event and follow up with a group lunch or brunch in the area.
- Local charities offer great ways to contribute to your community.
- Free events attract many alumni who otherwise would not come.

Habitat for Humanity: www.habitat.org/

Race for the Cure: www.komen.org/

Relay for Life: www.relayforlife.org/

March of Dimes: www.marchofdimes.com/

Loaves and Fishes: www.loavesandfishesonline.org/

“Service to UC Davis is at the heart of each chapter or network’s mission.”

PROGRAMS

Volunteering with CAAA

Service to UC Davis is at the heart of each chapter or network’s mission. CAAA also has a number of opportunities for volunteers looking to support our organization and the university. One great way for Aggies to give their time is by taking an active role in their chapter or network. Do they know of other alumni in the area? Get them involved with CAAA and its regional or special interest groups.

Aggie Welcomes

Each summer regional and special interest alumni chapters host welcome events for incoming first year students. Aggie Welcomes are a great opportunity to meet and engage local students, parents and alumni. Students who attend Aggie Welcome events receive pertinent advice and information that help ease the transition to campus life and may provide assistance for those that may have been unable to attend summer orientation. Generally these events take place during the summer after August 1, alumni chapters often welcome students at barbecues or picnic style events. If chapters have preferred local establishments, Aggie Welcomes are a great way for alumni to reciprocate for sponsorships and other types of support to the chapter.

Remember to include Parent Program materials in the Aggie Welcome programming. For more information on the CAAA Parent Program, please contact Becky Heard, Director of Parent and Family Programs at bjheard@ucdavis.edu. We hope you enjoy getting to know the next generation of Aggies and their families.

Alumni Ambassador

Each year UC Davis Undergraduate Admissions receives far more college fair invitations than they can accommodate. Alumni can take an active role in bridging this gap in resources. CAAA’s Alumni Ambassador program recruits and organizes alumni volunteers to staff regional college fairs. Time commitments vary depending on the volunteers’ interest. Some individuals will staff one fair while others may give several hours per week during the fall. For more information on volunteering at local college fairs, contact your CAAA liason.

Additionally, alumni volunteers can read applications and interview candidates for the CAAA Scholarship Program. As the first point of contact for many of our alumni, chapter leaders are integral in our volunteer recruitment efforts. For more information on these programs, please contact Jen Thayer ‘02 at jsthayer@ucdavis.edu. Sign up at www.alumni.ucdavis.edu/scholarships.

Aggie Classrooms

Alumni can partner with members of the Student Alumni Association (SAA) to work in local elementary schools to inspire children to go to college. SAA currently sponsors schools across California and Massachusetts and were featured in the winter 2010 issue of the UC Davis Magazine. For more information on the Aggie Classroom program visit the SAA page at alumni.ucdavis.edu.

- Represent UC Davis at regional college fairs via the Alumni Ambassador program.
- Contribute to student mentoring and outreach through the Student Alumni Association (SAA)
- Read scholarship applications as part of the CAAA scholarship program.

PROGRAMS

Volunteering with CAAA

Networks, Chapters and the Board of Directors

Regional and special interest programs are constantly looking for alumni volunteers to share their ideas, expertise and enthusiasm. Volunteer leaders provide the ideas and insights that allow CAAA to provide engaging and successful programming. Do you know of UC Davis graduates that are looking for alumni in their area or have shared interests? Have them contact CAAA for more information on getting involved at the grassroots level.

For more dedicated volunteers, the CAAA Board of Directors has several committees where alumni can give their time and energy to help shape the strategic direction of the alumni association. Alumni can join committees that speak to their interest or in which they can share their personal or professional expertise. For more information, please contact Rita Lundin at rmlundin@ucdavis.edu.

Conclusion

There is no shortage of ideas or opportunities available to our alumni, but this list is only a portion of what's out there. Each of these suggestions speak to different alumni in different ways. This is why we look to our volunteers for guidance. What works in your community? What would you like to try? What are we missing? These events, whether a happy hour social or community service project, bring alumni together and allow them to enjoy the company of their fellow Aggies. Have fun with these ideas and many others. With your insight and ideas, CAAA staff will help plan the event, leaving you the chance to enjoy (re)connecting with fellow UC Davis graduates.

EVENT PLANNING

Introduction

Alumni events come in all different shapes and sizes. From wine tastings and networking mixers to community service projects and speaker receptions, alumni events are hosted across the United States with the purpose of engaging UC Davis alumni. With these events we aim to reconnect alumni with their alma mater, continue the traditions of our college days while also creating new ones for the generations to come. Before planning an event for your chapter or network, ask yourself the purpose of the event and what you want to accomplish by bringing a group of alumni together. CAAA staff will help you in asking and answering these and the following questions. We will support you in myriad ways from venue research to providing you with an “event-in-a-box” consisting of: CAAA paraphernalia such as chapter/network banners, giveaway items and raffle items.

EVENT PLANNING

Choosing Time and Location

Finding a date and time

Before selecting a date, research calendars of events in the area where you wish to have your function. Other local events may impact the ability of alumni to reach yours. Traffic and time of day are important considerations as well. Other items to consider are: Will attendees have enough time to get to the event from work? Does the event take place during a school vacation window? Which demographic (e.g. young alumni, families, etc.) is more likely to be available during the time of your event? Are there any conflicts with religious or observed holidays?

For chapters and networks in the Davis/Sacramento area pay attention to competing events at the university such as Homecoming Weekend, Picnic Day and Parent and Family Weekend.

Begin your planning three to six months in advance. We ask that chapter leaders include a calendar of events as part of the business plan required for annual registration. Events submitted with less than three months notice that are not listed in the annual business plan are subject to approval and will receive CAAA support on a case-by-case basis. Networks should also provide three months notice, but are not subject to the annual registration calendar.

Choosing a location/venue

Events and locations should appeal to as large a demographic as possible. Consider the location's accessibility. Is the venue accessible by public transport? Is there adequate parking and are there costs? What are the site's traffic implications? Depending on the nature of the event, the venue should be family friendly.

Check with the vendor's calendar for other large groups at the same time? Are they accustomed to mid to large sized groups? Do they offer discounts for alumni groups? Be sure to ask about a non-profit rate. Will they have appropriate set-up and equipment to accommodate check-in/registration and a speaker? Do they play loud music at the venue?

CAAA's business strategy aims to break even on all chapter events. With this in mind, please ask yourself: How expensive is the facility and will the chapter earn enough to cover costs? Is a deposit required to reserve the facility? What is the billing arrangement? Can we secure a donated space?

Are there alumni in your area who can provide space at reasonable or no cost? Where do fellow UC Davis alumni reside in your community?

- Check for other events in the area.
- Check if the event takes place during a school vacation period.
- Check if there are conflicts with religious holidays?
- Check if the location is accessible by public transit and has adequate parking nearby.
- Set a price point that covers cost. Does the venue need insurance?
- Ensure that the venue is suitable for your group's size, need and demographic.

EVENT PLANNING

Venues

Arranging for room specifics

Outlining the style of the event and the set up will help the event run smoothly. A room's set up can also determine the level of social interaction.

1. How large a facility will you need? How many people will attend?
2. What kind of room layout will you need for your event? Will you need lecture style seating? How many tables (and of what size) will you need? Will you have a speaker? Will you have a head table? Should the podium and head table share space? How are guests to be seated? You should also consider if there is a per table/per chair setup cost.
3. Will you have access to the lighting, heating and cooling controls?
4. Will you need audio/visual equipment and assistance? Will you have music, a speaker, or a projector? Who will connect and monitor the technical equipment? Do you have control over ambient music? Will you have time to test run your equipment, presentation, etc.
5. Extras: What kind of, if any, refreshments will you serve? Will you need glassware? Will you arrange coffee service? Will attendees bring their own pen and paper? Is this a zero-waste event? Will you need special event liability insurance?
6. Additional considerations for the day of the event: Will you have a registration table? Will you need name tags? A sign-in sheet? Do you have enough staffing? Will you need giveaways? Display table? Table décor, linens, etc.? Often you can get linens from caterers. If the event is small or on-site, ask your CAAA liaison if linens are available or can be rented from the Alumni Center.

"The facilities at the Walter A. Buehler Alumni Center are available at deeply reduced rates to chapters and networks for social events and meetings. If chapters cannot or choose not to use CAAA facilities, please keep in mind the following considerations." For information on the Walter A. Buehler Alumni Center, visit alumni.ucdavis.edu/alumnicenter.

Alcohol

For there to be alcohol at group functions, there are a number of requirements and considerations volunteer leaders need to address. Restaurants serving alcohol will have their own permit and insurance. We recommend that volunteers or CAAA staff verify that an establishment has the appropriate permits and insurance for alcohol service. If your chosen venue does not have its own permit, then you have some choices.

Bartending services will typically organize the necessary permit and tend bar for a fee. Generally a one-day sales license will cost between \$25-50 depending on the event. Because of our non-profit status, group leaders can only obtain the one-day sales license from their CAAA liaison.

If CAAA does not acquire a permit, then hiring a bartending service is a great option. For every event, consult a CAAA staff member for more information on one day special event insurance coverage. These insurance policies are free through CAAA.

Please remember to include these costs when creating a budget. CAAA encourages all events with alcohol to be no-host as **CAAA will not reimburse volunteers for alcohol.**

EVENT PLANNING

Registration/Marketing and Advertising

Registration

Prior to an event, CAAA staff can collect registrations and/or payment online and share a list of registered attendees with you.

If registrations and payments are not collected in advance, questions to consider include: How will volunteers handle cash at the door? Who will be responsible for cash handling? Is it appropriate to include a sponsor or underwriter for the event?

CAAA has corporate sponsors and in-kind donations to supplement an activity's offerings. For more information on sponsorship opportunities, visit the section entitled "Marketing and Sponsorship."

Registration is always a great opportunity for us to capture and update participants' contact information. Even if money is not handled at the door, a volunteer must always take registration.

Marketing/Advertising

Your CAAA liaison will help publicize your event through a number of different communication vehicles. Because of the university's alumni database, CAAA has the ability to send targeted communications to specific regions, interests or demographics. All communications sent by CAAA undergo a review process that can take up to two weeks for online materials and longer for print.

Please begin planning with CAAA staff well in advance for your liaison to shepherd communications through our internal approval process. Ideally, to allow enough notice for our alumni, we look to send the first e-vite six weeks before the event. In addition, staff use Facebook, Twitter, and the CAAA website to drive participation.

For more information, please consult the Media and Communications section of the chapter toolkit.

- Collect registrations and payments through the CAAA website.
- Request sponsorship assistance for your events by submitting a request and event information to CAAA in advance.
- CAAA can publicize your event to all UC Davis alumni or to a targeted market. Ask CAAA staff for more information about getting the word out for your events and group.

EVENT PLANNING

Miscellaneous Tips

- **Mix it up.** Hold a variety of events to incorporate a wide range of activities and interests. Remember, variety is the spice of life.
- **Use what makes your city special.** Gearing events toward your area's unique opportunities provides an experience UC Davis alumni won't find elsewhere.
- **Keep event costs low.** Affordable events attract more alumni. Keep costs in mind when trying to attract families and young alumni.
- **Make good use of your alumni's time.** If an event is lengthy, make sure the reserved time is relevant. E.g. six hours to build a house for Habitat for Humanity versus two hours for a networking mixer.
- **Don't be afraid to break an event into two.** Keep your event focused so your guests don't lose interest or become restless. If possible, make your event short, sweet and memorable. Leave time for networking; people always linger after a great event.
- **Plan ahead and get help.** Start planning early with CAAA staff. Reach out to fellow chapter volunteers for planning and staffing assistance.

Conclusion

CAAA staff assist at every stage of the planning process by asking many of the questions detailed in this section. Volunteer leaders contribute the most when they share their ideas, communicate the desires of their group, and visit places that CAAA staff cannot.

Keeping events varied, fun, and affordable allow for groups to engage large numbers of alumni. Connecting with fellow graduates and supporting the mission of the university is at the core of CAAA's work.

MARKETING & SPONSORSHIPS

Introduction

Much of CAAA's recent program success is the result of its varying relationships with the private sector. Organizations partner with our association and its programs for a number of reasons. Primary among these reasons is the opportunity to communicate directly with our graduates.

As volunteer leaders, CAAA wants you to spend your efforts on creativity rather than paperwork. For each event we will need some information to budget and advertise; volunteer leaders should focus on the needs of their community, chapters or networks. We ask volunteers to drive programming through the ideas and information that, in turn, allows CAAA staff to operate more efficiently and effectively.

Our new zero-based budget model aims for our groups to break even from every event. Generally, this means that chapters and networks must institute nominal registration fees at each event. It also means that sponsors can play an important role in supporting CAAA programming. By incorporating sponsorships into each and every event we are able to subsidize our programming portfolio thereby increasing our offerings at lower cost to alumni.

As part of the annual registration process, chapters are asked to submit a schedule of events accompanied by event specific budgets. From these documents, CAAA will look to bring in sponsors to help cover or lower costs to the chapters. Based on information and contacts from our chapters and networks, CAAA staff can research and coordinate contributions on the group's behalf. We are constantly looking for new and creative ways to partner with the private sector; volunteers are essential to this effort.

MARKETING & SPONSORSHIPS

Partners/Sponsors/Benefits

Philanthropic sponsors donate to CAAA as recognition of our mission and contribution to UC Davis and its graduates. CAAA acknowledges these individuals and organizations and their generosity but does not provide goods and/or services in return.

Marketing sponsors promote a service, product or organization. These groups contribute to CAAA to achieve their goal of selling or promoting a product. In return for their contribution, CAAA provides recognition and access to our alumni. This access takes on different forms depending on the level and type of contribution.

Affinity Partners: Groups or businesses that offer a product or service and compensate CAAA for the opportunity to reach out to UC Davis alumni by attending regional and special interest events.

Corporate Sponsors: Businesses that choose to sponsor a specific event instead of entering into a comprehensive business relationship with CAAA.

Member Benefits: A group or organization that provides discounts or special offers to members of our association.

Affinity Partner	Corporate Sponsors	Member Benefits
		
		
		

CAAA does have business partnerships that can benefit regional and special interest groups even if these groups are not in the Davis area. However, chapters and networks may have local needs or access to local resources of which CAAA may be unaware. When this is the case, your insight into your community and your understanding of the network’s needs and goals are incredibly helpful to CAAA staff as they cultivate new business relationships to support you in your area.

Please note that CAAA does not sell contact information to affinity partners or corporate sponsors.

MARKETING & SPONSORSHIPS

What we offer

Our partners contribute to our events because they see a clear benefit in attaching their name to ours. When CAAA works with a particular organization we commit to recognizing them and showcasing their products and services. For this reason, it is important to realize that our volunteers play an important part in maintaining productive relationships. At events where CAAA staff members are not present, it is important that volunteer leaders ensure that our business partners are adequately recognized.

CAAA is an attractive partner precisely because of the size of our alumni base and the strength of our reputation. The greater the support we receive from the private sector the more CAAA can offer its constituents. One of the reasons we ask that volunteer leaders promote membership to our organization is because it allows CAAA to more effectively advocate for UC Davis' alumni body. Organizations contribute to CAAA because they want access in some way, shape or form to our alumni. CAAA provides this benefit in a number of ways.

Communications Recognition

CAAA will recognize partners in its print and electronic communications. Partners make their services known to our alumni when CAAA includes their logo and offers special thanks in its communications. Here are some of the communication vehicles CAAA has to offer.

Aggie Connections: CAAA's monthly electronic newsletter (as of Fall 2014) is now being sent to all alumni with active email address (estimated 150,000 emails of 225,000 total alumni).

AggieXtra: CAAA's quarterly electronic publication, the AggieXtra has a circulation of over 28,000 members.

CAAA uses these vehicles to advertise its regional and special interest events, many of which make attractive opportunities for potential partners. In both of these publications, sponsors have the opportunity to include their logo and links as part of CAAA's messaging (dependant on level of sponsorship)

Event recognition

CAAA staff ensure that all sponsors are clearly and visibly present at our events. This recognition takes on several forms.

Signage: Ensures that attendees are aware of a partner's contribution as soon as they enter the event.

Table recognition: Table tents and/or other discreet signage on each table ensure that guests are reminded of a sponsor's generosity throughout the night.

Presentation: Logos and a special mention are incorporated into every presentation whether by the emcee or in the body of a PowerPoint.

MARKETING & SPONSORSHIPS

What we offer

Website Recognition

A partner's logo will appear in several places ranging from the front-page image rotator, small image rotators located on the bottom of each subsequent page, to event listings pertinent to the sponsorship.

CAAA's web presence extends into the world of social media. From Facebook to Twitter, CAAA works to engage alumni on different platforms. In turn we can tailor recognition efforts to different demographics depending on their Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or general web presence. This presence makes our recognition efforts more dynamic than through the traditional print media because we can engage in constructive dialogue across platforms irrespective of location.

Analysis

One benefit of having a presence on CAAA's emails is our ability to analyze information from these communications. From each email we can see who received and opened the message while also tracking who clicked on links from within the email. We can relay this information to our partners so they can change or continue their strategies. Partnering with CAAA offers a dynamic approach to any organization that is looking to grow their presence.

Additionally, with our expanded presence on Facebook, CAAA has the ability to monitor and analyze alumni usage and reaction to chapter and network communications. The combination of web and Facebook analytics allows CAAA staff to differentiate messaging according to medium and demographics.

Alumni Database

CAAA can parse and filter data to offer access to a highly specific target market. The UC Davis alumni database (AIS) contains information on alumni location, student activities, association membership, basic demographic and other information that is pertinent to an organization's efforts to tailor its marketing plan.

Collecting good information is not only vital to CAAA's engagement efforts, it is vital to leveraging our constituency's size to better serve the needs of the university, the association, and its members.

Benefits in action

Vintage Aggies Wine Program:

One tangible example of how partners can benefit from working with CAAA is the Vintage Aggies Wine Program. Alumni vintners and wine growers have the opportunity to participate in a variety of events that showcase their variatals as well as the education components of our wine program. This is just one example of Aggies supporting Aggies through CAAA.

How to start the request process: If you have ideas or the contact information of potential partners, please contact your CAAA liaison. For more information about our and sponsorship, wine and travel programs contact Director of Business Development, Karen Collins at kkcollins@ucdavis.edu.

MARKETING & SPONSORSHIPS

Conclusion

CAAA's membership base is an extraordinary resource. Reconnecting alumni with CAAA through membership is not only important for the association's health, but it is important for the quality of the benefits we are able to provide for our graduates. As our membership increases the better, more comprehensive, our offerings will become. To enhance our strategic position we ask that volunteer leaders promote association membership and collect up-to-date information (addresses, phone numbers, etc.) at our events. This information connects alumni to each other, CAAA, the university, and our partners who work to contribute something to our university's graduates.

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

The Cal Aggie Alumni Association (CAAA) offers a number of avenues for chapters and networks to communicate with friends and alumni of the university. Many of our 225,000 alumni receive our emails, visit our website and Facebook pages, subscribe to our Twitter feed and read our contributions in the UC Davis Magazine. Working with your staff liaison, your group has the opportunity to reach new, engaged alumni and inform the larger UC Davis community of news and events.

Our alumni receive many emails, letters and magazines from graduate and professional schools, community organizations, and above all our university. Because of the variety of these communications UC Davis has developed a comprehensive and coherent strategy to simplify the way it communicates. When chapter or network leadership speaks to its alumni base, they speak as a representative of CAAA and UC Davis and are subject to university guidelines. Any content whether for email, print or web distribution must undergo CAAA's editing process and conform to university communication guidelines.

For more information on these guidelines and the use of university logos, please visit <http://strategiccommunications.ucdavis.edu>.

“...UC Davis has developed a comprehensive and coherent strategy to simplify the way it communicates.”

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

E-mail

The quickest, most efficient means CAAA has of reaching alumni is via email communication. Emails from our office must receive approval from your staff liaison, our communications team, our executive director, and depending on the target audience, the vice chancellor for Development and Alumni Relations. Given the extensive nature of this process, approval may require several weeks advanced notice. For maximum effect, we prefer to send an initial invite six weeks prior to any event. With enough notice, staff will prepare multiple follow-up invitations to drive interest and increase turn out.

Data Handling

UC Davis' database holds information on alumni and students ranging from home addresses to a student's organization affiliations. According to a group's criteria, the CAAA data administrator can provide a list of names and/or addresses for any physical or electronic mailing. Would you like to find the number of alumni living within a 30 mile radius of a certain zip code? Coordinate with CAAA staff to set your message's parameters (e.g. group affiliation, location, etc). Because these lists are comprehensive and because they include individuals who have not opted-in to a mailing list, CAAA's executive director and the vice chancellor of Development and Alumni Relations must approve the message's distribution. Without coordination at the vice chancellor level our alumni would receive disparate messages and an unreasonable number of communications from the university.

- CAAA's alumni database can find alumni based on location or shared affinity.
- Opt-in listservs require fewer layers of approval and target alumni with a proven interest.

Chapter/Network Listservs

Alumni who wish to receive news, updates and invitations from CAAA may sign up for e-mail lists according to their interest or location. When a chapter or network wishes to send a message to one of these lists, the message requires editing and approval, but the turn-around time is shorter than for e-mails requiring large database pulls. The opt-in lists are preferable for a number of reasons. Alumni who sign-up for these lists have a predisposed affinity for UC Davis and CAAA. These individuals require less staff effort to mobilize. Additionally, the lists are regularly maintained and require less time and fewer staff resources in approving a message. We ask that chapter leaders encourage alumni to join these opt-in lists as they are a versatile tool that makes e-communication more effective. To join an opt-in listserv, please e-mail CAAA at alumni@ucdavis.edu.

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

CAAA Website

CAAA's website is a powerful communications tool that helps chapters efficiently and effectively reach wide audiences of alumni. While all website content is subject to Strategic Communications guidelines, we encourage chapter leaders to take an active role in submitting content.

A chapter's most effective resource is its member base. Having good information facilitates daily operations and makes for a dynamic chapter. Alumni visiting our website are encouraged to register and update their information with CAAA. Information collected via www.alumni.ucdavis.edu will update current information in AIS – the university's alumni database. This updated information will make alumni association communications more effective. It will help keep alumni engaged with your chapter, the alumni association and the university.

Any and all material destined for the CAAA website must pass through a chapter's CAAA liaison. Since volunteer leaders are more in-tune with their chapter's community, CAAA will look to volunteer leaders for help in finding profile and news content. CAAA staff can and will help craft any published content, but will need your assistance in determining what is up to date and relevant for your group.

Web features include:

- **Calendars of Events:** Publicize upcoming chapter functions.
- **RSVP tool:** CAAA staff can track event registration and collect payments online.
- **Photos:** Recap successful events by uploading photos.
- **Chapter News:** Highlight chapter happenings by submitting news items for chapter pages. Spotlight prominent or interesting alumni in a specially designated profile section.

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Facebook

CAAA and all of its chapters and networks have a presence on Facebook. When used in conjunction with e-mail invitations and the CAAA website, Facebook becomes an important tool for engaging alumni, notifying friends, parents and graduates of upcoming events and important news.

Each active chapter will have its own official Facebook page (linked to CAAA's page and website) where they can post photos, news and event announcements. Network and chapter leaders will have administrative rights to these pages along with a CAAA liaison. CAAA will monitor content and ensure that the Facebook page is an open, engaging forum for alumni and friends. Specific network pages are an effective and efficient means of connecting otherwise lost alumni with the association and each other either by location or by shared interest. Individuals who "like" these pages demonstrate their willingness to learn about your network and attend their events. Volunteer leaders should talk to their CAAA liaison to receive administrative rights for their group's page.

Benefits and features:

- **Wall:** Each page and profile has a "wall" - a forum for friends to post public comments. Additionally alumni have the ability to "like" a wall post or comment by clicking on the "like" link located at the bottom of the post. Since comments are visible to the public, group administrators should monitor the discussion taking place in their groups to ensure a respectful atmosphere.
- **Info:** The info area on each page allows groups to state their aim and explain their history, interest, or generally communicate local alumni news. Links to each group page will appear in the info section of CAAA's own Facebook page.
- **Photo/Videos:** There is no better proof of a group's activity than photographs and video from successful events. Facebook allows users to upload and comment on photographs and video to the page for public consumption.
- **Visibility/Analytics:** Facebook pages allow you to direct your message to the place where users spend the most time - the newsfeed. This feature allows you to place your message among other news that a user would consider valuable thereby making your message more visible. Additionally while Facebook groups send e-mails for every notification, the page feature does not. As such, the page feature significantly reduces the number of erroneous messages alumni will receive.
- **Event Invitations:** Networks can publicize their activities by creating an event to which Facebook page followers can RSVP. Event invitations and listings should include a link that redirects to the event listing on the CAAA website. While the event feature is a convenient tool there are important limits to keep in mind. Networks cannot collect money through Facebook. To collect a registration fee, alumni must pay by phone, by mail, via our website, or in person at the event.

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Twitter/AggieXtra/Aggie Connections

Twitter

UC Davis alumni can now follow news from CAAA via Twitter. Alumni who follow our feed will receive the latest information on regional and special interest programs, signature events, member benefits, travel opportunities and more. Volunteer leaders provide information to be 'tweeted' by contacting their CAAA liaison.

When users post a message or "tweet," they can mention another user by typing @ followed by the mentioned user's name (e.g. @calaggiealumni). This feature allows you to have dialogues with alumni and users in a public space.

Twitter also allows you to "retweet" a user's post - essentially allowing you to share with friends a thought that you found interesting.

Tweeting and retweeting allows CAAA and its networks to craft messages that alumni can, in turn, quickly and easily share with others.

AggieXtra

Our quarterly publication, the *AggieXtra* provides CAAA members a complete update of the alumni association's activities. Formerly released in print, the quarterly newsletter is now expanded and available only in electronic format. Chapters and networks will have the opportunity to showcase their activity in the *AggieXtra* by providing topics and/or content to their CAAA liaison.

Aggie Connections

CAAA's monthly newsletter, *Aggie Connections*, offers alumni a small glimpse of our activities in a given month. Each issue includes links to and information on UC Davis news, CAAA's Travel programs, member benefits and upcoming events.

Conclusion

These vehicles, when working in concert, distribute our message to 220,000 UC Davis graduates. Your group plays a critical role in our efforts to remain in touch with, and provide programming for, these graduates. Most importantly, these tools will allow you to share the reasons why your alumni group is special and fun. Join Facebook, tweet your group's events and share your Aggie Pride.

<http://www.alumni.ucdavis.edu/>
<http://admissions.ucdavis.edu/>
<http://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/>
<http://www.ucdavisaggies.com/>
<http://mondavi.ucdavis.edu/>
<http://www.cevs.ucdavis.edu/>
<http://uoip.ucdavis.edu/>