

Truman State University

Alumni Association Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes for October 22, 2021



The Truman Alumni Board of directors met in person on the campus of Truman State University and via Zoom on Saturday, October 22.

President Jamie Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. and began with introductions

Members in attendance: Michelle Mollick, Bernee Long, Joyce Gentry, Mahlon Barker, Natalie Gerhart, Lori Hart, Stacy Tucker-Potter, Jeanne Harding, Joshna Karki, Alison Mayer, Lisa Marty, Beverly Davis, joining via Zoom Zach Lepperd and Ian Delinger. Also present was Mandi Wisner from the Office of Advancement.

Phil motioned to accept the agenda. Natalie seconded and the motion passed.
Minutes Natalie/Mahlon motion passed

Committee reports were submitted through Google Drive in advance of the meeting. Jamie opened the floor for chapters to add anything to their reports submitted in advance of the meeting.

Arizona - Jamie hosted an event via Zoom featuring the Truman steel band. Talking with Michelle after the BFF about possible programming.

NEMO - Michelle submitted a report in advance and yielded to Jeanne for the in person report. NEMO continued a standard event this summer - the long drive competition. The chapter awarded 4 scholarships this year. Several members participated in the postcard writing for incoming students. Starting to return to in person events with a volleyball game.

Mid-Atlantic - no report

Mid-Missouri - met virtually. They would like to see if Dogmaster distillery can do an event for them. Doing Living Windows on December 5.

Lisa - met to review scholarships; selected 2 great candidates. Working on a Homecoming trivia event. Trying to get their momentum back with more meetings.

Iowa - the chapter is struggling with leadership changes and the pandemic. Will be working with Stacy to plan some events

Natalie – No events to report. Hoping to do in-person events in the spring as well as TruCare.

Lori – The South Central Kansas Chapter did not meet this year. I've engaged in conversations with Ann Patterson and how and if we continue to reach out to these folks.

Alison - KC returned to some of their popular events but struggled to get the same attendance they are used to. The people who attended had fun. They changed some of their ticketing structure which worked well. They just hosted their scholarship golf tournament. Lower attendance but still good to raise funds for their scholarship. The scholarship is in the process of being renamed after JoEllen.

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Beverly - nothing to report

Ian - Looking forward to working with Jamie and Stacy to reconnect alumni in California.

Zach - trying to get in touch with Greek Life for working with affinity groups. Hoping Truman will play Ulndy so he can coordinate an event

Joshna - Registration currently occurring. Changed from TruView to the Portal, which makes announcements smoother. TruSolutions focused think tank met on October 12 and discussed campus climate. 25 years of being the #1 school in the midwest as well as #1 best value. McNair research scholars in September. Technology upgrades in the classrooms over the summer. Ryan Nely, a Truman graduate, started as our institutional compliance officer. Students have the opportunity to apply to be a student commencement speaker. Masks are still required, and our current case count is 0. They are offering incentives for students, faculty and staff to report vaccination status. Cash rewards if students get to 85% vaccinated, and days off for faculty and staff if they get to 75% and 85%. The Art Gallery exhibition features immigrant experiences. Women's entrepreneurship week event. In the former Fair Apartment lot, they have built a rock labyrinth.

Committee Reports

Nominating

We still have openings in Dallas and Chicago chapters. Not only do we have open board positions, but we also have a shortage of volunteers for all roles in those chapters and will need to start exploring next steps regarding chapters in good standing.

We have also looked at at-large positions to replace some of the positions we have lost. Adding some affinity group representation would give us the chance to add more positions and help staff our committees better.

Discussion commenced about the goals of recruiting at-large members with affinity connections and how to maximize new members who could represent an affinity group. If members have suggestions, those can be brought to the nominating committee.

Beverly shared that one of the challenges is that there are pockets of graduates whose experiences were not positive. They remain connected to each other. She has questions about how we address diversity and inclusion.

Stacy suggested we shift the agenda to allow Natalie the chance to review the Strategic Plan earlier because Natalie has to leave the meeting to present an update to the Foundation Board.

1. Connect alumni to each other - networking events
2. Connect alumni to the university - there is a desire to connect to current students
3. Connect others to the university - evangelize

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The purpose directly corresponds to the purpose of this strategic plan. Some underlying goals of the plan include diversity, equity and inclusion as well as data-driven decisions. We have not done a good job of keeping data. The CRM will allow better and more functional data. We also want to define why people should engage with the alumni association and define the value we offer.

Each goal has strategies where we dig deeper on how we achieve that goal. The metrics give us measurable ways of determining how well we are succeeding.

In addition to the one page strategic plan, we have developed a road map that is a more narrative structured way of describing how the plan could be executed.

Advancement Update - Dr. Ernie Hughes

One initiative on the Foundation side is Truman Rising. We are working on building a funding reserve and aligning with the academic schools. This will help prepare us for the next campaign.

Officer report

Jamie submitted ahead of time but acknowledged the hard work to be in person again.

Lori reported on efforts to create cross committee collaboration among committee chairs. She's also spearheaded an offboarding process and spoke with two individuals who recently went off the board. Working on improving communication and working on the ability to engage with our alumni based on affinity groups.

Stacy reported that a mass membership mailing has gone out. The Advancement office is working to improve accounting and communication procedures surrounding membership and hopes these improvements give the chapters the ability to steward their members.

Natalie thanked the group for their continued commitment during challenging times.

Committee Reports

Chapter and Club Development Hosted the Bulldog Forever Forum virtually with about 25 people in attendance. It focused on re-engaging with a road map of what that could look like. Dr. Saint Rice joined us for a conversation about creating a more inclusive alumni experience. We also recognized some of our award recipients and closed the event with a round table of how we individually can move the Alumni Association forward. Making continued progress on content drops and efforts to support our chapters and clubs.

Programs & Awards Phil submitted information about the Book Club, Spirit Day and awards. Moving forward, they are transitioning to a liaison model where people can engage and take ownership of projects.

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Student & University Relations We launched the postcard program to incoming students very quickly, thanks to the help and engagement of alumni. We plan to expand that to help get touches to incoming students in the recruitment pipeline. Thanks to Jeanne's partnership in the committee, we have the opportunity to connect to students in our new online programs. It helps connect these students to campus and grow these programs.

New Business

Chicago and Dallas Alumni Chapters do not have the necessary number of volunteers to remain chapters in good standing, and we will need to begin the process of transitioning them to their probationary status.

Chapters in good standing - during the initial stages of COVID we were relaxed in the standards for chapters in good standing. We need to revisit those guidelines and start transitioning some groups back into the standards for Chapter in good standing. The new strategic plan will give a good opportunity to revisit these standards as we go into the new year.

University President, Sue Thomas

COVID update - back entirely in person, masking. Mask policy will be evaluated November 5. Everyone on campus stepped up to meet the needs and kept us on campus all year last year. A public health faculty member spearheads our COVID response, and we have a student team that does contact tracing. Our vaccination efforts have focused on community. For students, we are focusing on residence halls, student organizations and athletic teams. If those groups can verify 85% of their members are fully vaccinated, they get financial incentives. For employees, if they reach 75% vaccination status, they get an additional day off during Thanksgiving week. For 85% vaccination status, they get two additional days off. Other schools are releasing their mask policies, and we are evaluating what happens on those campuses to try to navigate our approach as well as following Adair County vaccination rates. Budget approach is to reimburse ourselves with federal money wherever possible. Presented the Greenwood project, as well as an ecosystem of programs forward as a funding proposal through the state. They are also working on a funding proposal to create an access and student success center that addresses holistically the needs of our students. The state has included Greenwood construction money in the budget. Financially, the university is in a very good place. Overall enrollment is still down and will be for the next 3-4 years. First time full time freshman slightly down but was balanced by our graduate programs. We had full cohorts for newly launched programs in data science and mental health counseling, and we've seen increases in our existing programs. The University has been officially recognized as the #1 public institution in the Midwest for 25 years in a row.

Natalie motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lisa seconded. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

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(Minutes prepared by Stacy Tucker-Potter.)

Board President

Date

Board Secretary

Date