

A GUIDE TO PLANNING YOUR EVENT

During the Summer, try to plan your calendar of events for the entire year. Be sure to check community calendars and sports schedules before choosing your dates so your plans won't conflict with large community events. Events should be directly related to the Alumni Association's mission as well as the interests of its members. Space your activities as evenly as possible throughout the course of the year. Optimal event scheduling would be to host two events in the Fall and two in the Spring. This will provide adequate time for preparation and will ensure better attendance and participation.

QUALITY NOT QUANTITY IS THE KEY!

Always keep in mind the diverse interests of your constituency and plan a wide range of activities that address the needs of membership.

Note: Some alumni groups publicize two or more events in one mailing if the events are close together.

As you plan your event calendar, keep these questions in mind

- 1.How many events do we want to host?**
- 2.What type of events do we want to have?**
- 3.When do we want to host these events?**
- 4.Where do we want to host these events?**
- 5.Who will be invited? (members, non-members, etc.)**
- 6.Who will be in charge of each event?**
- 7.How much will these events costs? Will we charge an admission fee?**

If these questions have been answered at the end of your planning meeting, you will have built a good foundation for the year.

All logistics should be discussed with the Alumni Association Staff Liaison at least 12 weeks prior to event.

- Coordinate the details of the event and event notification.
- If the event requires registration/payment, that process can be set up through the on-line registration.
- The proposed budget of revenue and expenses for the event should be discussed with the AA staff liaison in the Alumni Office for approval prior to the event.

The USF Alumni Association's Staff Liaison will supply materials such as, door prizes, nametags and pens, Alumni Association membership materials and affinity partner brochures, USF banners/signage, registration cards, and RSVP lists.

The key to a successful event is communication between the alumni group leader, volunteers and the Alumni Association Staff Liaison.

- Include a map or directions on the invitation if the location is not well known by local alumni.
- Recruit enough volunteers for registration so that it flows smoothly and efficiently. Oftentimes, large groups come in at one time.
- Consider atmosphere: Decorations or background music go a long way toward making a good event a great one.
- If you are charging a fee for an event, payment is requested in advance to reduce the risk of no-shows.
- When listing information to respond for RSVP's, be sure to list phone number and e-mail address. Include a deadline date for responding.
- Make phone calls to local association members who haven't responded to ensure participation and event's success. The Alumni Association Staff Liaison will provide you with names, addresses and phone numbers of members in your area. You may request an updated list at any time prior to the event.

Tips for making calls

Begin by saying that you are from the _____ USF Alumni Association alumni group, and state that you would like to know if they received the recent event notification. You might add that you expect the event to be enjoyable, educational, etc., and that you wanted to make sure they knew about it and encourage them to come. Be sure to let them know all details to attend the event. Be prepared to answer any questions they may have (i.e. can they bring friends, time and location, etc).

- Be sure that a volunteer greets every participant personally. If possible, have a **reception committee** that greets newcomers.
- **Publicly recognize** the volunteers who have helped plan and coordinate the event. This will keep them involved and provide incentive for them to help with the next event. This is an excellent opportunity to recruit future volunteers.

When you are planning your events for the fiscal year, please use the mission of the Alumni Association as your guide.

Mission of the USF Alumni Association

The mission of the USF Alumni Association is to foster a mutually beneficial, lifelong relationship between the University and its alumni; to inspire loyalty and pride among current and future alumni; and to advocate for excellence in teaching, research and public service.

Examples that support the Mission are the following:

USF Alumni Membership Recruitment
Enhancing relationships with USF Students/potential USF students
Mentoring
Bulls Network
Homecoming
Continuing Education
Supporting our Affinity Programs
Support and Delivery of inCircle
Assisting in the Promotion of USF Traditions
Legislative Advocacy
Assisting with Young Alumni Programs
Brand Recognition
Enhance Customer Service & Communications
Recruitment of dedicated volunteers for committees and board

Vehicles or tools that can be used to accomplish the Mission:

USF Athletic Events (Watch Parties, Tailgates)
Community Luncheons
Community Service Events
Networking Mixers & Socials

Examples that are not considered part of the Mission are the following:

Golf Tournaments
Fundraisers
Selling t-shirts, Raffles

* Note: The above events not considered part of the mission, may be done with the understanding that there will be limited or no support from the Alumni Association.

Reconnect alumni: www.usfalumni.net