

SIGMA PI ALUMNI CLUB/ASSOCIATION AREA GUIDELINES

Description

As Fraternities are for life, it is vitally important to engage Brothers after leaving their undergraduate Chapter. Organizing an Alumni Association can be a rewarding exercise. It is a great way to keep area alumni connected with the Fraternity, to promote the activities of multiple local chapters and the Executive Office/Educational Foundation, and to professionally and socially network with Brothers. Initiative, commitment and a strong area alumni base are keys for starting an area based association. Below is a list of recommendations to consider before starting an area group. Do not forget to involve the Province Archon, The Executive Office and any active chapters in the area/state/region as you establish the association.

Starting an Area Alumni Association

- Check for an association in your area
 - Visit the sigmapi.org (sigmapi.org/alumni/alumni-clubs) and check to see if there are any Alumni Clubs already established (or have been previously established) in your area.
- Determine how many alumni live in your area
 - Contact the Executive Office and request a [Membership Record Request](#) for alumni within a certain distance of your zip code. The best suggestion is within 25 miles of your location. The Executive Office can help you with this.
- Visit the Alumni & Volunteers section of website for resources
 - Examine the steps to charter or re-charter an alumni club/association on the Sigma Pi website.
- Plan your kick-off event
 - Plan an event to gauge the interest of area alumni. This event should be easy to plan and require minimum involvement from attendees. The event will set the tone for the support and participation that area alumni will need to commit to in order to get the association off the ground. Take some time during the event to find out what types of programs and how many events a year people would commit to. Your goal should be to organize an organization launch team (the first board of director). If there is an active Chapter or Chapters nearby, it is advisable to work with them to promote the event to their Chapters and to their Alumni.



SIGMA PI

- Prepare your communication
 - Work with the Executive Office to craft letters and the best way to distribute them. Remember that Alumni may respond to mailings that come from *sigmapl.org* rather than your own personal account.
- Follow-up with Fraternity Staff
 - Before, during, and after the event, you need to keep the Executive Office in the loop. If you send out emails and various ones bounce back, those addresses need to be communicated to the Communications Office in the Executive Office. Pictures of the event should be taken and sent to the Executive Office for possible inclusion in future communications or the Emerald.



SIGMA PI

The Four Areas of Alumni Engagement

There are four areas of a successful alumni engagement program; identification, communication, cultivation, and solicitation. The association is charged with aligning efforts with the chapter to complete these areas.



Identify

Before the association can actively engage their alumni, they need to create an alumni database. An alumni database will provide the group with the information needed to reach out to their alumni. This is the first step in alumni involvement and one of the most important pieces in a strong alumni engagement program. The database can be started by contacting the Executive Office to talk about generating a list of all alumni within a certain area around a select zip code.

Communicate

Meaningful communication is essential when it comes to alumni engagement. The alumni want to hear about their chapter! Most alumni will not go out of their way to contact the association; this is why it is very important for the team to put extra time in communicating with the alumni. The best avenues of chapter-alumni communication is through a semesterly/quarterly newsletter and social media. It is also important to work with Chapters in the area/state/region so that you can aid in communicating with undergraduate members. This type of communication not only aids in the senior-to-alumni transition but also encourages those Chapters to communicate what is going on to any of their alumni.

Cultivate

Alumni cultivation is a major player in having an effective alumni engagement program. Once a line of communication has been created between alumni and the association, the next step is to host an alumni event. Chapter alumni events are generally held in conjunction with an alumni association event. Alumni events are just like recruitment. First impressions are essential to creating an atmosphere where the alumni will want to come back. An alumnus is most likely to attend an event that is family/spouse friendly.

Solicit

A comprehensive alumni engagement program, which properly identifies, communicates, and cultivates alumni annually, will help a chapter to build its local alumni entities. If the association executes steps one through three, they will be more successful when soliciting time from the alumni. Alumni will start to give their time when they see the association is actively engaging them. The three areas where alumni have an opportunity to get involved are alumni advisory boards, house corporations, and alumni associations. Once the alumni start to engage the association, there is an opportunity for fundraising. Historically a chapter led fundraising campaign leads to petty funds. The best opportunity for the chapter to raise money is through an alumni association led campaign. Alumni would much rather give when other alumni ask them to give than when the chapter asks.



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