

CLUBS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 9, 2010

10:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Mother Pauline Room, Cushwa-Leighton Library (2nd floor)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Liz Bermingham Lacy (Chair), Sarah K. Brown (Vice Chair), Nora Barry Fischer, Monica Stallworth-Kolimas, Annette Isom, Mary Sue Dunn Curry, Karen McNamara Weaver, Rebecca Votto Bennett, Lisa Maxbauer Price, Annie Harton '11, and Elizabeth Mueller '12

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kathleen Gibboney and Kimberly Roland '12, student

INVITED GUESTS: Jessica Stuijbergen, Assistant Director of Alumnae Relations, Phyllis Sullivan VanHersett, and Liz Wade '11

COMMITTEE PURPOSE: The purpose of the Clubs and Resources Committee is to foster communication between the alumnae club network and the College and explore methods of encouraging alumnae leadership.

MINUTES

Liz welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order, and offered the opening prayer. She acknowledged that the Committee approved the minutes of the March 2010 meeting electronically, via Yahoo Groups. Each committee member and guest introduced herself.

Liz provided a summary of the history of the Clubs & Resources committee, the charge the Board leadership provided the Committee for this year, and the work of the Committee over the summer. The Committee worked in five focus groups, on the following topics: Club Connections, club leadership exchange, club programming, Board-club liaisons, and admissions.

Sarah provided an update on Club Connections. As discussed by the Committee via conference call, the Committee will continue to publish Club Connections in paper, with an increased focus on personal stories, centered around interviews of successful club leaders and club events. The Committee will increase distribution to two editions per year. The Fall edition will be mailed to club leaders in October. Lisa and Rebecca will provide a summary of the One Book, One Saint Mary's project for inclusion in Club Connections. Kimberly will work with Jessica for updated information on the College. Dawn will provide a summary of the Welcome Home event, and Linda will provide a welcome note from the Alumnae Board. Assignments are due to Sarah by September 30, 2010.

Lisa updated the Committee on the One Book, One Saint Mary's project. This is the first year of the project, intended to encourage involvement with the College and to build community. The concept for executing the project is for each committee to independently run with projects that support the overall program. The hope is for alumnae clubs to use the book as a club event during the next year. Jessica reached out to clubs to determine which clubs have existing book clubs. A blast email will go out to club leaders. We will include a message about the project in Club Connections, and as a talking point for liaisons. The Committee may develop other creative incentives for the clubs to read the book. Nora suggested that if Lisa receives a quantity of books from the publisher, we send a copy to a club president inviting her to use the book for her club. Liaisons may also wish to send a copy of the book to their club leaders.

Jessica reported that the number of Annual Reports she received from club leaders is down this year, to 16. She received 18 or 19 in years past. One possible reason for the decline is the retirement of a couple of faithful club leaders. Jessica indicated that 15 clubs have a presence on Facebook, and suggested that liaisons encourage clubs to become active on Facebook. Jessica explained that she will be pushing for increased accountability this year from club leaders, in the form of annual reports, and activity reports after each event. Activity reports are not a new requirement, but submission has not been actively encouraged or enforced in the recent past. These reports demonstrate that a club actually held an event, and provide proof of who attended. The forms are available online, to be printed, completed, and sent in. Several board members expressed concern about this requirement and the potential to frustrate club leadership. Rebecca suggested that the College create an online form, and Sarah suggested that liaisons encourage club leaders to CC Jessica and/or the liaison on emails about events, as a way of tracking club activity. Karen encouraged Jessica to provide leaders with the "why" behind the requirement. Liz suggested that clubs create a College point person other than the president to help with requirements.

The Committee broke out into its five focus groups for separate discussions of about fifteen minutes, after which each focus group offered a report to the full Committee. Groups were to discuss whether their focus area was an appropriate role for the Committee to play, and if so, what types of things the Committee should do to promote that focus.

Admissions (Nora, Kathleen)

Nora and Annie Harton will meet with the new Director of Admission, Kristin McAndrew, at 1pm today to discuss the role of alumnae clubs in admission. The Board has experienced difficulty in making scholarship phone calls, but have found yield receptions to be generally successful. Nora will discuss whether admissions is a good focus for this Committee and will provide follow-up via email.

Liaisons (Karen, Monica)

The group decided it is important for all Board members to continue to serve as liaisons, and contact each club leader after each board meeting with talking points. Accountability of board members is important, with liaisons needing to turn in reports to Jessica. We need a process for

contacting the clubs assigned to a Board member who is absent from a meeting. We also need to set clear expectations for new Board members about the liaison role. Important for liaisons to avoid appearing to “grade” clubs, but serve as a means of support.

Leadership (Mary Sue, Annette)

Providing a platform for club leaders to exchange ideas, and enhancing communication between club leaders is a good role for Committee. Execution is important, as we are concerned with overlap. The Board members could serve as conduit for successful ideas between clubs. We could have a Facebook subgroup for club leaders, with one new idea posted per month, or questions and answers. Important for Board members to make this easy on club leaders.

Programming (Lisa, Rebecca)

Developing programs for clubs and serving as a clearinghouse for club activities is an appropriate role for our Committee. The Committee cannot execute the event, but can help facilitate club programming and provide the resources for the club to plan the event. How the Committee does this will be different based on the program.

The Committee then discussed other areas of concern for our Committee that do not necessarily fall into the above five focus groups. Committee members raised the following topics:

- overarching concern about struggling clubs, how to define a successful club, increase numbers of attendees, refresh leadership
- club scholarships: include with programming, as fundraising events
- ways to thank and reward club leadership
 - include club leaders in Face to Face stories on SMC website
 - alumnae volunteer of the year
 - recognize in Club Connections
 - provide a free copy of the book selected for One Book, One Saint Mary’s
 - these efforts may result in club leaders responding to reports more routinely
- facilitate information from College, including on athletic events and faculty visits
 - Jessica noted that the Dean’s office is reluctant to give out faculty travel schedule
 - Committee suggested we ask faculty if they want alumnae support at public speaking events; perhaps in the form of a letter from Alumnae Board President
 - this is a programming issue

Liz indicated that she would recirculate the comments Rebecca made on our current Standard Operating Procedures, with the intent to review and revise the content based on our discussions at the meeting, and present any changes to the full Board at the March meeting.

In other business, Jessica reported that 13 club leaders and 8 Board members attended a Webinar, and that the feedback from those who attended was good.

The meeting was adjourned.