

## Metropolitan State University

### Alumni Association Board Meeting

March 29, 2022, 5:30-7 p.m. Via Zoom

**Board members attending:** Brittanie Aune, Amanda Clark, Deidra Isaac, Thulani Jwacu, Thomas Krueger, Salman Mian, Annie Mueller, Scott Pilgram, Shahbaz Shah, Nancy Uden, Shanasha Whitson

**Board members not attending:** Samuel Farrand, Fidelis Odozi, Ryan Ringwelski

**Staff attendees:** Kristine Hansen, Rachel Hughes, LaBarre Spence, Joshua Windham, Noriko Ramberg

Nancy Uden convened the meeting at 5:32 p.m. Kristine Hansen introduced Josh Windham, Associate Director of Alumni Relations, to the Board. Josh has ample experience working with nonprofits and volunteer engagements, and has skills and values from which the Board can benefit.

#### Approval of committee notes

Board members reviewed the committee notes prior to the board meeting. Motion to approve the committee notes moved by Scott Pilgram, seconded by Salman Mian, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

#### Office updates by Kristine Hansen

Hansen shared upcoming events:

- Spring Fest, organized by Student Life and Leadership Development, Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Alumni Board will have a table to promote the Alumni Association, and volunteers will be needed to staff the table. Hansen will later send an email to collect interest.
- The implementation of the networking software, *PeopleGrove*, is close to launch. It is a tool to connect students and alumni based on their career and personal interests on their profile. There will be a learning session for the Alumni Board in April to help set up a profile in *PeopleGrove* prior to the official launch. We also plan to promote it to students and alumni at the Spring Fest.
- Outstanding Student reception, Saturday, April 30, 12:30-2:30 p.m. by Zoom. Contact [Edwinna Johnson](#) if you would like to attend.

#### Board membership recruitment

*Method of recruiting to-date and its cons:*

- Referral from staff—It has been difficult to follow up without a process and to gauge skills fit.
- Self-nomination—The skills s/he brings in may not meet the skills the Board seeks, or it could lead to her/his dissatisfaction due to unmatched expectations.
- LinkedIn search—It is time-consuming, and it could lead to her/his dissatisfaction due to misunderstood expectations.

*Efforts taken by the Membership Committee to improve the method of recruitment:*

- Developing an online application to streamline the process
- Ensuring that the process aligns with Metro State's missions, visions and values to include broader alumni base for engagement opportunities
- Creating a process without the sense of rejection, and instead, affirming the sense of engagement by redirecting the applicants' interest to other volunteer opportunities such as mentoring, guest speaking, event planning, etc.

*Ideas and thoughts from the Board to improve the application process and to further alumni engagement:*

- Be transparent with what we need and inform applicants of what they can expect next in the process.
- Stay true to Metro State's core mission, vision and values—making the form user-friendly, culturally sensitive, being mindful of barriers applicants may face and be accessible to their needs
- Give applicants a chance to express areas they are interested in
- Include on the online application form the multiple ways alumni can serve by listing past, present and future activities
- In an effort to be more inclusive in the early stage of the process in reaching out to a wider audience, give them the ability to have a choice on how they can be engaged. List various opportunities—not only serving on the Board, but also volunteer to work at events, classroom activities, committees, etc. Within that initial pool of volunteers, the Board could possibly identify the strong board prospects who seem to have a good fit for the actual Board work.
- Grant the current Board a chance to get to know the applicants and point them towards the right opportunity.
- In an effort to start being inclusive and covering all alumni, provide information to every graduating student at the time s/he registers for graduation—to disseminate the information early!

*Ways to deploy an online application to achieve meaningful engagement while meeting the needs of Metro State alumni and students:*

- Expand and broaden the application process and be descriptive of various volunteer opportunities in addition to board membership.
- Clarify expectations and the expected time commitment. List alternate options in case they are not selected for board membership.
- Deploy a variety of tools/venues/social media that casts a large net to get larger responses
- Add a role description and an expected time commitment of various volunteer opportunities
- Build an interested pool of alumni first before approaching them with a commitment to certain roles
- Have the current Alumni Board engage with applicants—informational meetings, interviews, decisions, etc.
- Share Alumni Board members' life/career stories and emphasize that one does not need to be famous to become a board member; we welcome all Metro State alumni to be engaged to the Alumni Board and its work
- Divide the applications in two—one for volunteer interest and the other for Board recruitment, and include the first application form in the graduation package that goes out to new grads
- Have a checklist of the strengths, talent and skills applicants could offer even though they are not fully ready to engage with Metro State

**Other business, comments & thoughts**

- Only eight people responded to the survey requesting the preferred format of the May board meeting. Please respond with your preference—virtual or in-person. Hansen will send a reminder email with the survey link again tomorrow.
- Uden requested the Board share feedback with Hansen and her on their take of the recruitment process from their own experience. It would be beneficial for them to know what the Board should keep doing and stop doing.

- Hansen experimented a new interactive software, *Mentimeter*, throughout this meeting, to capture thoughts, get the feel of the usability and adaptability for our future board meetings and retreats.

Some feedback from the Board:

- Taking notes during the discussion was cumbersome, but once capturing our thoughts on the platform, we were visually able to see the extraction of our thoughts, and it was helpful to see the distilled message as we continued our discussion.
- It was user-friendly and we liked it, but character limit was a hindrance to express our thoughts.
- We liked the visibility of everyone's thoughts in one place.
- We were able to type in, but unable to get the result or see what others were typing in a virtual setting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Noriko Ramberg, Office Coordinator