



Alumni Association

FY15 Annual Report

Accomplishments and Highlights

The George Washington Alumni Association

September 2015

FY15 Association Officers & Executive Committee Members

President **Steve Frenkil**, CCAS BA '74

President-Elect **Jeremy Gosbee**, CCAS BA '98 GWSB MBA '02

Secretary..... **Jonathan Tarnow**, CCAS BA '93, LAW JD '96

Vice President for Financial Affairs & Treasurer**Larry Murphy**, ESIA MA '80

Vice President for Awards.....**Jim Quinlan**, CCAS BA '00

Vice President for Career Services..... **Katharyn Hiebert**, GWSB '04, ESIA'04

Vice President for Communications.....**James Walker**, CCAS BA '07

Vice President for Nominations & Governance..... **Keith Greene**, GWSB, BBA '79

Vice President for Programs.....**Fiona Conroy**, CCAS BA '04, GSPM MA '06

Vice President for Student-Alumni Initiatives**Jacqueline Hackett**, CCAS BA '08, MPP '10

Parliamentarian..... **Buddy Lesavoy**, GWSB BBA '80, MBA '82, LAW JD '87

Executive Committee Appointee **Morgan Corr**, CCAS BA '07

Executive Committee Appointee **Kyle Farmbry**, ESIA BA '92, GWSB MPA '94, PhD '99

Associate Vice President, Alumni Relations & Development (*ex-officio*)..... **Karen White**



FY15 Committee Assignments

Executive Committee

Steve Frenkil (*Chair*)
Fiona Conroy
Morgan Corr
Kyle Farmbry
Jeremy Gosbee
Keith Greene
Jacqueline Hackett
Katharyn Hiebert
Buddy Lesavoy
Larry Murphy
Jim Quinlan
Jon Tarnow
James Walker
Karen S. White (*ex-officio*)

Awards Committee

Jim Quinlan (*Chair*)
Gloria Berberich
Scott Jackson Dantley
Paul M. Fires
Lamin Juwara
Michael La Place
Helen Li
Ilisse R. Perlmutter

Career Services Committee

Katharyn Hiebert (*Chair*)
Asha Aravindakshan
Christine Carnavos
Michelle Harris
Alex Haseley
Priscilla Monico
Julie Silverbrook
Michael Suder
Thelisha Woods

Communications Committee

James Walker (*Chair*)
Beverly Bogerty
Deborah Butterfly
Elizabeth Dollens
Shannon Cerminaro Doyle
Kristine Esposito
Nsedu Obot Witherspoon
Courtney Tallman Thorne
Jon Tollefson

Finance Committee

Larry Murphy (*Chair*)
Martin Baum
Aaron Deer
Marilyn Yakowitz

Nominations and Governance Committee

Keith Greene (*Chair*)
Aaron Binstock
Charles Calloway
Morgan Corr
Anne Cutler
Andrew Dixon
Jeffrey Fair
Jinder Gill
Randolph Graves
Venessa Perry
Paula Segal
Jon Tarnow

Programs Committee

Fiona Conroy (*Chair*)
James Correa
Brooke DeLancey
Beth Furtwangler
Alex Dietrich Greene
Jennifer Leighton Guzman
Christopher LaRocque
Renee Lewis
Judith Lipner
Rachel Talbert

Student-Alumni Initiatives Committee

Jacqueline Hackett (*Chair*)
Joe Altenau
David Brunori
Tim Gowa
Nick Gumas
Buddy Lesavoy
Ari Masefski
Martha Morris
Steve Roche
Benjamin Trajtenberg

Awards Committee Report

FY15 Accomplishments

1. With 9 committee members, a diverse group of professionals with varied academic concentrations and degrees from GWU, worked closely and cohesively to nominate two terrific slates of nominees
2. Had 100% participation by committee members in deliberative sessions, almost 100% timely submission of work product, and 100% giving rate among committee members
3. Held two highly successful awards ceremonies: the 78th Annual Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards on September 28, 2014, with record attendance, and the 54th Annual Alumni Outstanding Service Awards on April 15, 2015.
4. Convened successful awardee nomination meeting by phone conference due to timing of Board meeting preventing in-person nomination session
5. Completed (first of its kind) successful electronic vote of GWAA Board to selection DAAA/RAAA awardees
6. Sent letter signed by Awards Committee Chair to each person who nominated someone for an award thanking them for their nominations and explaining that it was extremely challenging to select from the list of excellent nominees.

Projects in Progress

1. Encouraging committee members to play a stronger role in the nomination process by drafting initial summaries of nominations.
2. Encouraging committee members and Board members to play a role in facilitating the nomination of high quality and perhaps overlooked alumni.
3. Continue to promote flexibility in considering opportunities to give awards to meritorious awardees, even if the awardees cannot participate in traditional ceremonies under exceptional and appropriate circumstances.
4. Help GW and the GWAA capitalize on the prestige of awardees by transmitting press releases to regional and professional news sources through a cooperative effort with the Communications Committee.

Challenges

1. Determining when and how to recognize international alumni at the Global Forum; Alumni House continues to work on this as there are challenges due to cultural sensitivities.

Goals for the Future

1. Reconnect with the deans of each school to emphasize the importance of their role in nominating candidates for awards
2. Continuing to focus on timely completion of duties by each committee member
3. Continued success of both award programs

Career Services Committee Report

FY15 Accomplishments

This year's committee was highly engaged and focused. Over the course of the year we engaged ***nearly 2,000 students and alumni in career related activities*** from mentoring students one-on-one to distributing a survey to the alumni population to gather insights to networking with Alumni both in-person and virtually. Committee members advanced the Career Services mission for the GWAA and made some significant accomplishments in support of our goals:

1. Modeled a Culture of Colonials Helping Colonials

- Participated in over half of the Alumni Career Services hosted 18 Virtual Networking Events
- Attended all Alumni Career Services hosted Networking Breakfasts (NYC and three industry based—Breakfast and Business Cards in Washington, DC)
- Rallied Alumni speakers for several of the 12 GWebinars hosted by Alumni Career Services
- Held 10 Committee Meetings with several Subcommittee meetings to plan, organize, and engage Alumni via networking, mentoring, and speaking events over the course of the year
- Brought in three Alumni companies including American Red Cross, Ogilvy and Mathers and Reclaim New York to Career Quest events aimed at educating GW Students about different career paths
- One committee member chaired her Reunion Committee for Alumni Weekend

2. Enhanced the Student-Alumni Connection

- Mentored 35 students via the Career Quest program providing them with resume and interviewing tips
- Mentored several students throughout the year and actively participated in Career Fairs & Resume Madness hosted on campus
- Acted as panelists at the NYC Young Alumni Networking Breakfast
- Presented social entrepreneurship as an engagement solution for students and alumni to the Career Services Center

3. Developed long-term relationships with a diverse array of alumni and potential employers

- Hosted a NYC Young Alumni Dinner connecting with 7 other Alums from GWU 2013 and 2014
- Engaged the Career Services Center to participate in our meetings (and we loved having them!)
- Engaged employers, classmates, other alumni to participate in annual Career Service activities
- Shared case competition advice with Career Services
- Deployed a survey to understand our alumni population—received 742 responses

4. Supported the goal of 100% philanthropic participation for the GWAA Board of Directors

Challenges

Over the course of the year and via our survey, we realized that this Committee continues to have the following challenges:

1. Marketing and Communication
 - Survey results reveals that 61% have never participated in GW Alumni Career Services and between 71% and 96% of responders are either aware but never participated or unaware of GW Career Services programs.
 - Committee needs to collaborate with GW Alumni staff to better strategize and promote career service opportunities for career development and volunteer work. This includes:
 - The promotion of GW Virtual and in-person networking, GWebinars, Alumni Career Services, GW Career Service Center and individual school career office offerings
 - The synchronization of career websites across campus
2. Culture of continuous learning, development and networking
 - When asked to provide an open comment about Career Services in our survey, many respondents point to their own experience as students as to whether they see value in or will use the GW Career Services.
 - While we cannot change the experience alumni have had as a student in years past, we can address two things:
 - Ensuring a quality student career services experience moving forward. Alumni can assist in hosting Career Quest events, participating in Career Fairs, acting as mentors, serving as panelists in many of the events across campus, etc.
 - Re-engaging alumni mid-career to provide value in networking events, resume reviews, and career counseling to name a few.

Goals for the Future

To continue the work we accomplished last year, the Career Services Committee commits to the following goals:

1. Model a Culture of Colonials Helping Colonials
 - Engage in Career-Focused Networking Opportunities
 - Support and inform the efforts of Committee Liaison Michael Steelman in his role on the Career Services Advisory Council through support of outreach to traditional, veteran, and on-line/non-traditional alumni
 - Engage the GW Career Council on ways to better leverage the career services websites
2. Enhance the Student-Alumni Connection
 - Support and inform Rachel Brown in her role as Assistant Provost for Career Services in engaging Veterans and On-Line/Non-traditional Students and developing career treks
 - Participate as an alumni career advisor in the GW Career Advisor Network
 - Participate in student-alumni programs such as Career Quest
 - Promote and entice Alumni to host a Career Quest
3. Develop long-term relationships with a diverse array of alumni and potential employers
 - Promote Hire GW
 - Promote programs and services to educate alumni on how to become more effective in their chosen professions
 - Coordinate with Alumni House and GWAA Committees to better leverage resources
4. Support the goal of 100% philanthropic participation for the GWAA Board of Directors

Communications Committee Report

FY15 Accomplishments

1. Increasing the diversity and variety of alumni stories provided to the Division of Development and Alumni Relations communications staff for publication on the GW Alumni blog or other publications. 20 stories were provided by members of the GWAA board. Of these, five were short-listed and one piece was written after an interview with the alumnus.

Challenges

1. Staff transitions within the Division of Development and Alumni Relations resulted in inconsistent contact with the committee.
2. The committee also faced bandwidth challenged with university staff unable to work on initiatives proposed by the committee.

Projects in Progress

1. Gathering a Voice: the committee continues to write stories for the GW Alumni news blog, develop profiles of alumni, collect GW memories, and develop other content initiatives.
2. Social media dialogue: the committee is leading efforts to ensure that alumni leaders are visibly represented on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social media platforms.

Goals for the Future

1. Increase GWAA Board participation in promotion of university activities
2. Create opportunities to promote positive stories from the alumni community
3. Provide useful strategic input on GW alumni relations activities

Finance Committee Report

FY14 Accomplishments

1. **Continued to seek out and evaluate potential affinity partners.** Performed comprehensive due diligence on Social Finance, Inc. (SoFi) to determine if it would be an appropriate partner. It was the opinion of the Finance Committee that SoFi was an ideal partner, providing the GWAA with a new source of revenue while offering GW alumni a convenient and economical means to refinance student loans. Initially the General Counsel of the University opposed the partnership on the grounds that such a relationship would violate Section 140(b)(2) of the Truth in Lending Act. We disagreed with this opinion as the loans would be made to graduates, not students currently enrolled. Further conversations between the Finance Committee and the University were not constructive.
2. **Increased the percentage of GWAA funds allocated to long-term investments (equity and debt securities) to 40%.** This should provide a higher return on our funds without taking on undue risk and while maintaining a significant portion of our funds in more liquid and FDIC insured accounts (money market funds and bank time deposits).

Projects in Progress

1. We continue to search for potential affinity partners that complement our existing relationships.
2. We continue to evaluate long-term investment options that provide an appropriate balance of capital preservation and favorable returns.

Goals for the Future

1. We are starting a review of our current accounting platform and considering upgrading to a more robust system that would provide better historical record keeping, improved budgeting and more easily produced financial statements.
2. We are modeling revenue and expense trends under various affinity partner scenarios and economic environments to determine the feasibility of allocating Association funds to the proposed CFC Fund.

Nominations & Governance Committee Report

FY14 Accomplishments

1. **Introduction of a Competency Assessment with the Board:** to prepare for the nominations process for the 2015-2016 GWAA Board of Directors, the Nominations & Governance Committee established an Ad-Hoc sub-committee which was tasked with creating and implementing a Board Competency Assessment. Key competencies for Board success were identified and current GWAA Board members continuing service on the 2015-2016 Board completed the assessment. The results enabled the Committee to identify competency gaps and target outreach efforts and interview focus for candidates for the incoming Board. The assessment was also used for the two officer positions mentioned below. The Committee also gathered demographic information to insure that the 2015-2016 Board would be representative of the alumni population at-large.
2. **GWAA Board of Directors elections:** in the spring of 2015, the Committee managed a process to solicit applications for Vice President for Financial Affairs/Treasurer and for Secretary, along with members-at-large of the GWAA Board of Directors. The Committee, through the Office of Alumni Relations, reached out to all affiliated Identity Groups as well as to the key contacts within each school of the university, specifying the competency needs and demographic opportunities available for the 2015-2016 Board. The result was a pool of approximately 40 uniquely qualified candidates, and the Committee faced a tough decision in selecting 14 candidates to nominate for presentation and consideration for election at the 2015 Annual Meeting. The Committee also selected candidates for the Vice President for Financial Affairs/Treasurer and Secretary positions.
3. **Governance Decisions:** at the request of the GWAA Executive Committee, the Nominations and Governance Committee vetted a series of governance issues throughout the year. The most notable of these were focused on the President's authority for Ad Hoc Committee and Task Force Creation and clarification that University employees were eligible for GWAA Board positions but not for officer positions.

Projects in Progress

1. **Onboarding New Board Members:** the Committee is continuing its work to ensure that new members of the GWAA Board of Directors are oriented appropriately to their service on the board. This included participation in an orientation session prior to the board retreat in July 2015.
2. **Board Liability and Indemnification:** at the direction of the Executive Committee, the Nominations and Governance Committee is reviewing the GWAA Bylaws and is examining insurance policies to ensure that board members, volunteers and the Association itself are appropriately protected from potential liability.

Challenges

1. **Board Member Diversity:** the GWAA Board of Directors continues to make significant progress in recent years to diversify its membership with regard to gender, race, geographic location and other factors, there remains work to be done. While the number of female board members continues to constitute a minority of the Board membership, six of the 14 nominees are female. Also, six nominees are candidates of color.

2. ***Committee Leadership Transition:*** there will be a change at the Committee Chair level for the 2015-2016 year, with the new Chair coming from within the Committee.

Goals for the Future

1. Identify candidates for GW Alumni Trustee positions as necessary.
2. Identify candidates for the President and President-Elect for the 2016-2017 Board, along with the usual procedure for selecting Members-at-Large; and
3. Fine-tune the Competency Assessment tool and process.

Programs Committee Report

FY14 Accomplishments

1. **GW Alumni Weekend 2014:** the Programs Committee again worked to enhance our own GWAA Board participation and engagement with Alumni Weekend, ultimately getting at least 33 members (or 50% of our Board) to participate in some part of Alumni Weekend. That is more than double the number of members who attended GW Alumni Weekend 2013, and an increase from less than 10% to 50%+ in just 2 years. We also assisted OAR staff in recruiting non-Board alumni to attend the weekend, through the postcard program and other efforts. Finally, the Programs Committee communicated the idea of having a GWAA Board meeting during Alumni Weekend 2015 in order to encourage increased GWAA participation in Alumni Weekend, and to give other alumni an opportunity to see what the GWAA does. This idea was enthusiastically supported by the whole GWAA Board.
2. **GW Homecoming 2015:** the Programs Committee helped to plan and promote GW Homecoming 2015 through our personal social media networks and outreach to fellow alumni. We also
3. **The GWAA Grant Program:** the Programs Committee devoted much of its work in FY15 to transitioning into the primary management and administration role of the GWAA Grant Program. The Committee worked extensively with OAR staff to identify best practices and important process steps, and – with the approval of the full GWAA Board – updated the overall Grant Program statement to govern the program moving forward. The Programs Committee also did some internal restructuring (i.e. the creation of subcommittees) in order to best accommodate our increased role in the Grant Program.

Projects in Progress

1. **Grant Program for FY 2015-2016:** the Programs Committee will be taking over the management and administration of the GWAA Grant Program in FY16. The Programs Committee will review grant applications, award grants, help OAR communicate with grant recipients about Grant Program expectations, and encourage greater GWAA involvement in Grant recipients' events and programs. The Programs Committee will also continue to communicate with the President and Executive Committee about the goals of the Grants Program, and revise the Grants review and outreach processes accordingly.
2. **GW Alumni Weekend 2015:** the Programs Committee will continue our work to support and promote Alumni Weekend 2015, including assisting OAR with outreach to targeted groups of alumni. We will also work to identify opportunities for GWAA Board members to speak or introduce other speakers at GW Alumni Weekend events.
3. **GW Homecoming 2016:** the Programs Committee is currently in the early stages of identifying what the appropriate role for our Committee, and GWAA as a whole, in the GW Homecoming process.

Challenges

1. **Our First Year with the Grant Program:** While the Programs Committee is very excited to play a much larger role with the Grant Program, one of our biggest challenges for FY16 will be figuring out how to balance the Committee's work with the Grant Program and the other

existing Committee work, such as playing an advisory role to the alumni-related signature events, Alumni Weekend and Homecoming.

2. ***Figuring Out Our Role with Homecoming:*** The Programs Committee and GWAA want to support the University's homecoming programming, but need to figure out the most effective way to support these activities.

Goals for the Future

1. In concert with OAR, successfully manage the GWAA Grant review and award process in the Programs Committee's first year administering the program.
2. Continue to have meaningful conversations about the goals of the Grant Program, and perform an annual review at the conclusion of FY 16.
3. Continue to play an enhanced role in advising and supporting Alumni Weekend, including advising on the type of events, the schedule of events and the registration process.
4. Continue to increase GWAA Board attendance and participation in both GW Alumni Weekend 2015 and GW Homecoming 2016.
5. Identify the best role for the Programs Committee and the GWAA board at large to play in GW Homecoming 2016, and grow alumni interest and participation in that event.

Student-Alumni Initiatives Committee Report

FY15 Accomplishments

1. Participated in (and increased the participation of alumni in) the **Regional Dinners** during all four Colonial Inauguration this summer. Members of the GWAA also had a speaking role at each dinner promoting the GWAA and alumni connections.
2. Participated in 2015 **Summer Send-Off Program** for incoming freshmen (GWAA board members hosting include: Buddy Lesavoy – Allentown, Steve Frenkil – Baltimore, Marty Baum – New Jersey, Jim Quinlan & Anne Cutler – Philadelphia, and Alex Haseley - France).
3. The **Legacy Family Commencement Reception** at Alumni House was held on August 30, 2015 and welcomed incoming freshman, upperclassmen, and their families back to Foggy Bottom.
4. The **Dinner with Alumni** program continues to be a favorite of students and alumni. Many GWAA board members hosted dinners for undergraduate and graduate students; some of these dinners were industry-specific.
5. The third annual **Student-Alumni Day of Service** was held on October 25, 2014. Nearly 80 GW Colonials volunteered with five community non-profit organizations and more than 300 hours of direct service were completed.

Projects in Progress

1. Participation in (and increasing the participation of alumni in) the Dinner with Alumni program.
2. Ensuring every alumni volunteer with student-alumni programs is personally thanked by a member of the GWAA committee.
3. Providing narratives about the importance and value of student-alumni connections
4. Engaging students and alumni in service to their University and community; showcasing how students and alumni can both lead and work collaboratively.

Challenges & Goals for the Future

1. Increasing the number student-alumni interactions, and the number of alumni volunteers involved in those events. This includes increasing the participation of members of the GWAA board at these events.
2. Providing additional ways for regional alumni to engage and support students. These upcoming activities may include virtual networking, and Dinner with Alumni events in designated cities during the summer months.
3. Identify ways to support student organizations in their engagement of alumni in collaboration with GW Student Affairs staff.