Quarterly Club Call Notes: November 11 & 13, 2014

University News and Campus Updates:

Columbia Alumni Leaders Weekend:

- We completed the 10th Leaders Weekend in October, with a 40% increase in attendance from the previous year.
- Volunteer-led sessions provided higher involvement and positive responses from those in attendance.
- We hope to have the trainings and sessions during Leaders Weekend teach best practices and skills that are most useful to volunteers in their various roles.
- We encourage everyone to attend next year.
- Suggestion: adding more online components for those who are unable to travel to attend.
- Some of our club leaders posted photo highlights from the weekend. Please see their albums here and here.

Columbia Gender-Based Conduct & Sexual Assault:

- There is a lot happening and a lot of change that will result in safer campuses
- Columbia has dedicated a lot of energy and resources to take the right steps toward this goal
- There is a second location and new positions in the Sexual Violence Response & Antiviolence Support Center
- Created an open dialogue with complaintents and respondents with expert guidance and support for all involved
- www.sexualrespect.columbia.edu – more information about Columbia’s policy and the official University statement and background facts
- Barnard’s sexual assault policy mirrors Columbia’s and can be found here: http://barnard.edu/publicsafety/crime-report/sexual-assault-policy
- Joe from Sao Paulo – Why is University approach to sexual misconduct different than what federal law regulates?
  o There are certain things that the law requires that University policy regulates and mandates in regards to sexual misconduct

Peter Liang, Long Island – Alumni Panel Events:

- Peter’s notes in separate attachment
- For every event it is important to have a partner, either with someone in the CAA, with a local business/venue, alum, etc.
- Tasking people or creating volunteer opportunities to help get people involved and committed to attending an event. Be very specific when asking for help.
- Leverage the CAA for their support with your events, through the Toolkit, speaking with your liaison, etc.
- Utilizing NationBuilder to market events and encourage people to register through their site.

**Eric Lukas, South Texas – Newsletters and Club Communication:**

- The club newsletter used to be a sporadic tool, hosted through mailchimp, but they have recently moved to the NationBuilder platform and are working to integrate the newsletter with their NationBuilder website.
- Intended the newsletter to be a primary means of engagement for alumni in the Houston/Galveston area, announcing club events at the beginning and partnered/Ivy events and alumni news in the body of the newsletter.
- Progressively gather more and more updates from alumni each month, and more engagement from members as a result.
- The newsletter helped to raise awareness for the club, and it has grown substantially as a result.
- Do newsletters prevent from sending event announcements separately? (Kambiz Rahnavardy, DC) Yes. There have been instances of follow-up communication, but they try to maintain limited email blasts and work to announce events through the website and through the newsletter. They do send out separate emails for larger events like the holiday party and the Columbia Connects event in September.
- How many unsubscribes do you get from a typical email blast? (Kambiz Rahnavardy, DC) Initially, their unsubscribe rates were higher, but as time passes, they don’t have many unsubscribes from their email blasts.
  - The current Houston alumni list is around 2,000, with alumni and friends, and the unsubscribe rate is far below 1%, mostly from those who have left the area and neglected to update their information.
- **2014 Email Marketing Benchmark Study**

**Louise Giles and Farah Mohammed, Michigan and Australia – Columbia Alumni Leaders Weekend Takeaways:**

- Meeting other club leaders and speaking with regional clubs was great.
- The Columbia Entrepreneurship opportunities are remarkable and helpful for young graduates.
- Donna MacPhee led a session about Leading through Influence, outlining three methods for engaging volunteers and inspiring service: 1) use of logic 2) inspiration 3) core/heart. Remember that all volunteers expect a uniformly positive experience.
- Incentives for dues-paying members, discounts for early RSVPs. Making events appealing by showing pictures of people having fun and using “eye candy” at the registration desk – happy, friendly people.
- Providing recognition to volunteers to thank them for their engagement. Please ask the CAA if you would like a copy of the CAA-branded recognition template.
- Partnership and collaboration with the Columbia Global Centers is a great resource for international alumni clubs.

**Alex Szabo, San Diego – Columbia Alumni Leaders Weekend Takeaways:**
- Not everyone is going to go to every event; plan to have a variety of events – maybe 6 per year or every other month
- Always look for new members and attend a lot events to identify future potential leaders and for new ideas and events
- The best method to engage alumni is to keep it simple. We want to effectively plan events and execute them; our members want content-driven events, not necessarily topic-driven.
- Holiday greeting card and newsletter for past events and announcing upcoming events – building momentum off of past success
- All Ivy+ helps for sharing event content and alumni populations amongst Ivy universities

Ruth Craxton, Philadelphia – Succession Planning and Board Structure:
- Nominating committee meets prior to annual meeting in order to nominate board members
- They utilize NationBuilder to send out information for all leadership meetings, and all members of the alumni community are welcome to attend
- They have discussed lengthening the terms, but they decided that 1-year terms are best for their club currently
- How are clubs utilizing the NationBuilder “rolling calendar” to structure their boards?

Salim Al-Jahwari, Oman – Transition and Succession Planning:
- It’s important to keep records/templates to help with onboarding another person to a leadership role.
- Recognize repeat attendees at events, and gauge interest and volunteer interest through conversation and continued interaction.
- Volunteer recruitment and succession planning link from toolkit

Stephen Wang, Northern California – Alumni Newsletters:
- Close to 10,000 alumni in NorCal, and working to get a larger engagement for alumni in the area
- Working to have alumni come to them with newsletter content
- Using NationBuilder to send out newsletters
  - Alumni spotlights at the top of the newsletter - after highlighting a couple people, they were able to get more content, and alumni involved in the area started offering benefits for being showcased
  - It’s great that NationBuilder lets clubs use the platform in ways that best serve their alumni populations
- What kind of criteria do you use to highlight alumni and their activities? Alumni self-promotion vs. altruistic causes? Who decides which activities will be promoted? (Karl Metzner, Beijing)
  - The board of directors oversees the content of the newsletter
  - Since this is a new tool, they haven’t been inundated with content requests, and they are able to arbitrate what they think community would respond to
  - Eugenio in Miami – they send periodic updates to their alumni population, and they have to decide when to send for the best and most neutral stance
- The newsletter becomes a community of Columbians interested in what one another is doing

Carla Newman, Malaysia – Professor Travel Schedule:
- The CAA works to be in close conversation with school-based partners in order to share out the travel schedule
- Something else to consider – engaging a prominent alum in the community

PayPal – depending on payment structure set up in NationBuilder, there is a small percentage of the costs that goes to the service
- The majority of clubs are using PayPal through NationBuilder, but you may visit either the Chicago or Palm Beach sites to see other forms of payment capture
- Tucson still utilizes checks, and there is a way to gather information through NationBuilder without requiring a payment through the internet – see DC

Regional Club Updates:

Domestic:
Boston: Steve Kane, John Mullervy
- New Boston board members – four younger alumni – who will expand representation; they are looking forward to collaborating with Barnard and other schools. Professor event with online learning component. Columbia Connects had about 90 people in attendance. Columbia EdX events will hopefully bring 50. Good momentum with sporting tailgate vs Harvard.

Colorado: Seena Berg
- Increased activity, with volunteer activities, and local speakers presenting on regional topics.

Houston: Theresa Quintanilla, Erik Lucas
- 60-70 people active at events on a regular basis; professor visit and holiday party in the next few months; more involvement with special interests in the area

Long Island: Peter Liang, Robin Kent
- Started last year, with 9,000 alums in their region; 70-100 active members at events; Toys-4-Tots event; Networking Happy Hours; author/professor events and young alumni events

Miami: Daniel Hekman, Eugenio Cano
- Art Basel coming up the first week of December. Host committee and programming committee – goal of 215 attendees.

Michigan: Louise & Bob Giles, Ellen Piligian
- The launch of NationBuilder made things a lot easier for the club. Recent lawn tennis event with prominent alum. Professor Katie Freese on cosmology will be coming on November 25. Working to incorporate. On average 20-30 people attend their events.
Northern New Jersey: Mark Hipp

- 150 dues-paying members, and they are working to get more people involved in attending events. Just hosted Professor O’Meally speaking about the Romare-Bearden event that will be happening on campus soon.

Philadelphia: Jessica Stein, Daniel Ferreira, Eliza Matache, Ruth Craxton

- Reaching a new population of alumni through NationBuilder. They recently held a wine-tasting event and a professor event with Ionnis Mylonopoulos. Regularly have 50 members who participate in events with 100+ dues-paying members.

San Diego: Alex Szabo

- Columbia Connects event in partnership with the B-school, with over 60 in attendance. Several events being planned, including an Entrepreneurship lecture hosted by Chris McGarry, Director of Entrepreneurship at the CAA.

San Francisco: Stephen Wang

- Actively planning events for 2015; professor event with a film professor; wine tour at an alumni-owned winery; solved a space problem with alumni-owned venues in the area to host event – Ted-X style talks.

SoCal: Anthony Agoni

- Large club. Tequila tasting and Toy Drive coming up, as well as an annual ski trip. Working on nominating committee for upcoming elections. Revamping treasury and accounts to formalize them more. Fully utilizing NationBuilder and appreciate the tool.

Tucson: Ron Farris

- Successful board meeting and activities. Upcoming book signing “The Emerald Mile” with Columbia author. Holiday party at a local country club. Professor event in February. Working to find more volunteers and expand the board of directors. They’ve gained new members since adopting NationBuilder, and they look to build their membership in the next year.

Washington, DC: Kambiz Rahnavardy

- 400 dues-paying members, upcoming tour of the White House, which sold out in a matter of hours; Hamilton dinner and lecture in January.

International:

Argentina: Jonathan Gerszberg

- Monthly lunches with prominent community members. Rebuilding active engagement and club leadership.
Australia: Farah Mohammed

- Sydney charity event at soup kitchen, Thanksgiving/end-of-year dinners in Melbourne and Sydney coming up.

Basel: Philippe Waelle

- Ivy League gathering and Columbia Connects event held in September.

Beijing: Karl Metzner

- Recent visit from SW dean, administrators, and faculty – hosted a small dinner with Professor Niraj Kassel. September mixer with Oxford and Cambridge. Speed Dating in July with other Ivies. Trip to the Great Wall with a small group of alumni. Looking to host a mixer with NYU and Cornell alums. Possible Christmas event.

Belgium: Capucine Rosenfeld

- Film Festival in December; speaker event mid-December or early next year; Ivy+ networking and drinks.

Delhi: Nikhil Wason

- Student send-off in July. Columbia Connects activity in September. Visit from Jackie at the beginning of November. Working to revise council and looking for new volunteers.

Hungary: Laszlo Czirjak

- Just had President Bollinger in Hungary – great discussion about geopolitics and freedom of the press. Only about 40 alumni in Hungary. Having the President in town helped to rejuvenate club momentum. Alumni like to host student groups traveling to Hungary.

Kenya: Mustu Barma, Christopher Grune

- Monthly happy hours

Malaysia: Carla Newman

- Still working to revive the dormant alumni activity in Malaysia. Getting a sense for alumni needs and work to connect the older generations with the younger graduates.

Milan: Marzia Sesini, Rocco Rosa, Michelle Schoenung

- Started in July with their first chapter event. Rome is more active with cultural events. Milan had a book reading event in September. They are working to discover ways to connect with the Rome club and combine activities for alumni across. They have hosted aperitivos, a tour of the opera house, and they are prepping for World’s Fair next year.

Oman: Salim Al-Jahwari

- Club began last year, trying to meet 2-4 times per year; there are only 10-15 regular attendees at events; members share ideas and world views, and they feel comfortable attending events; many visitors find them and reach out about meeting while they are in the area; combined
events with other regional leaders – Dubai & Kuwait; hope to partner with other Ivy league schools.

Paris: Jean-Pierre Reichenbach
- Thanksgiving dinner coming up. Hosts happy hours every month. Impressionist art exhibition.

Rio: Molly & Fernando Multedo
- Spreading the word about online course engagement, global MPA through Rio Global Center

Sao Paulo: Joe de Pinho, Diana Nasser
- Joint event with the B-school, getting to know the officers there and working toward more coordinated events between the clubs. Organizing a holiday dinner, and working to get a professor teach-in meal with a visiting professor. Reach out to Jennifer to learn more about professor travel schedules