



U of M Alumni Association &
Alumni and Constituent Relations

2008 – 09 Annual Report

*Tammy Hedges
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Relations*

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University of Memphis Alumni Association & Alumni and Constituent Relations

Executive Summary

The University of Memphis Alumni Association, lead by President Martin Zummach in his second year of leadership, takes pride in the continued growth of alumni participation and giving during the past six years. Participation has increased at every level and, at FY09, stands at an institutional high with increased alumni, friend and donor engagement. Organized by a more formal structure designed to support alumni and friends of the University, the U of M Alumni Association has taken vital steps to implement procedures and policies in step with “best practices” in the field.

Our identification statement says it best – *The University of Memphis Alumni Association: Advancing, Connecting and Engaging the University of Memphis family.*

True Blue Tradition

“Every great city has a great University, and every great University has a great Alumni Association.”

*University President, Dr. Shirley C. Raines
Spring 2004, Vision Forum*

Membership

The University of Memphis Alumni Association enjoys the largest membership in its history. Prior to 2003, the largest paid membership on record is 2440. Beginning in 2003 with approximately 1100 members, the current number of Alumni Association paid members totals 5576, an all time high representing an yet another increase over last year. With the current economic climate, the Association has experienced a slowing down of joining, but membership has still steadily increased.

**By the numbers...
largest Alumni Association membership in
University of Memphis history by nearly 3000 members.**

Membership Growth

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1117 members	1644 members	1871 members	2508 members	3567 members	5018 members	7434 members

Table: Note that 2009 Year includes the new program of Associate Members whereby graduates are given their first year of membership complimentary by the Association. The 2009 number includes the 2008 May graduates only.

By the numbers...
Current membership of the Alumni Association has increased by approximately 600% since the restructure and new appointments in 2003.

Through the Alumni Association and its Clubs and Chapters, up to 39 student scholarships and book scholarships are given totaling over \$44,000.

By the numbers...
Since 2003, Association growth through Clubs and Chapters has extended from 13 to 71 areas of participation and engagement.



2008-09 Notable Association Projects

Although the Association annually administers and coordinates a comprehensive slate of programs and activities that benefit its members, noted below is a sampling of new projects and enhanced programs that was initiated this past year.

- Creation of the Associate Member program that includes a complimentary membership in the Association for new graduates for their first year; marketing campaign designed to promote the Associate Member program and the Association.
- Partnership developed with the University of Memphis Association of Retirees (UMAR) to benefit and enhance the membership of both organizations and unify efforts to better the University.
- Developed effort with the University of Memphis Recruitment Office to engage alumni and the alumni staff in a systematic outreach for recruiting students. Such efforts include visible recruitment efforts seen at local alumni events, alumni involvement at athletic events and out of town alumni events.
- Unveiling of extensively enhanced benefits package for alumni and friends members of the Alumni Association to include discounts from local, regional and national companies and businesses.
- Reunion program expanded through the coordination of the Frosh Camp Counselors Reunion this past year and moving forward with reunions for U of M Cheerleaders and Luther C. McClellan activities this fall.
- Targeted marketing effort for the Alumni Association during the Football Bowl Activities and NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament.
 - Coverage on most local television and radio stations.
 - Creation of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blog marketing.
- True Blue Goes Green
 - Through the ipod touch contest during the NCAA Tournament, alumni membership email accounts were confirmed allowing for better electronic communication and eliminating the need for much of our direct mail pieces. 75% of alumni membership is reachable by email.
 - Purchase of equipment eliminating the need for the creation and mailing of temporary membership cards.
 - Purchase of equipment and creation of program to scan paper forms eliminating much of use of paper products.
- Introduction of e-community for alumni and friends.
- Highlighting of selected alumni during each enews.

- Redesign of Alumni and Friends Webpage to include:
 - Video of each club and chapter report attached to webpage.
 - More movement on the site and better coverage of current alumni highlights.
 - Call to action items for alumni and friends.
- Creation of Association backdrops and event displays used at club and chapter events.
- Redesign of Association name tags to designate life membership, annual membership or not yet members.
- Creation of the *True Blue Bulletin* that is sent weekly to club and chapter leadership highlighting the Association meetings and events for two weeks at a time.
- Implementation of bus given by the Hardin estate to promote the University to be used at football and basketball games, recruitment events and alumni events as a marketing tool for the Association as well as a staple in event execution.
- Purchase and design of lighting equipment and logo lighting equipment used to enhance club and chapter events.
- Software designed and purchased whereby all email communication is reported informing the Association which emails are opened, forwarded or simply deleted making communication from the Association more effective.
- Development of more affinity revenues through benefits package – credit card, percentages given to Association through member activity.
- Tammy Hedges, the Executive Director of the Alumni Association & Director, Alumni and Constituent Relations, was named the 2008-09 Administrator of the Year at the University of Memphis.

By the numbers...

**251+ Events held by the Association
and its' Clubs and Chapters**

237 Club, Chapter, Committee and Association Meetings

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New Programs and Plans for 2009-10

The University of Memphis Alumni Association has begun its implementation of several new initiatives for the upcoming academic school year in order to advance the Association and continue to fulfill the mission of the University.

- The University of Memphis STUDENT Alumni Association is currently being created and will be launched this year. This organization will assist in the efforts of the Association in creating a relationship between current students and alumni, developing a culture of giving back to the University and learning how a lifelong relationship with the University can be rewarding and beneficial.
- The University of Memphis Alumni Association staff and the Cecil. C. Humphreys School of Law Alumni Chapter are deeply involved in the upcoming opening of the new Law School Building downtown. Mark your calendars for January 16, 2010.
- The Hispanic Alumni Society is forming and lead by past members of the University of Memphis Student Hispanic Association. This Society will currently focus on alumni within the United States.
- The first international society for alumni of the University of Memphis is forming and lead by a member of our National Executive Board of Directors. The Asian Alumni Society will focus on the Asian culture abroad.
- The Association will expand its efforts during Homecoming to include University of Memphis Staff Appreciation Day. With the assistance of the U of M Human Resources Office, the Homecoming Parade, Pep Rally and Party will include additional activities directed toward faculty and staff. Expanded efforts will include a petting zoo, t-shirt giveaways and an increased number of inflatables.
- The Alumni Association will increase its presence at all home football and basketball games through the use of the True Blue Bus (given by the Hardin Estate) to include a focus on increasing membership.
- The Association hopes to launch a Commencement Day celebration reception to include participation by all colleges. This plan has been put on hold for several years due to budget constraints.
- *Backpacks to Briefcase* will be launched in March 2010 celebrating our seniors at a graduation day hosted by the Association. Entertainment, food and information concerning Association membership, graduation, graduate school and other career related essentials will be provided.
- Create corporate alumni clubs and chapters. The Association's first initiative in this direction will be Smith and Nephew in August.
- In anticipation of the celebration of the University's centennial in 2012, the Association is launching several programs this upcoming year:
 - *Tigers Around Town* will be launched whereby large Tiger statues will be purchased by sponsors, painted by alumni artists and placed on campus then

throughout Memphis to celebrate the centennial year. This campaign is must like that of those seen in many other cities such as Chicago and Atlanta.

- The information for the True Blue Directory will begin to be compiled for distribution. This directory will list information on all graduates that give their consent and may be purchased by alumni and friends. This service has been requested by many of our alumni.

Closing Comments

There are several areas of concentration where work is needed in order to continue advancing the Association. Though the better development of these areas, the Alumni Association as a whole will advance. Note that the goals set for this past year have been met with the exception of membership which should be met before the Association's deadline of 2012.

Goals for the 08-09 academic year included the following:

- Continue building membership to reach 2012 goal of 10,000 members.
- Adopt e-community for alumni and friends.
- Create more communication mediums for alumni and friends.
- Build affinity revenues.
- Implementation of Tigers Around Town sponsored by the University of Memphis Alumni Association in anticipation of the 2012 University Centennial Celebration.

As stated last year, as an Association, we confront market uncertainties: however, our overarching goals will remain the same. We will continue to focus on membership growth, the strengthening of the Association through focus on clubs and chapters and the expansion of communication with our alumni and friends.