

## **PLAYBOOK FOR REGIONAL GROUPS AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

### **PURPOSE OF REGIONAL GROUPS**

Cardinals should feel connected to Wesleyan and each other no matter where they are—and regional groups and representatives are the best way to make that happen.

Regional groups consist of a core group of representatives who plan activities, identify and recruit new volunteers, and generally take the lead in shaping the local Wesleyan presence through outreach, social media and events. Staff members from the Office of Alumni & Parent Relations serve as staff liaisons to regional groups, and work closely with regional representatives to assist in facilitating the planning and presentation of programs and initiatives.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF A REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE (SUGGESTION IS 1-3 REPRESENTATIVE PER REGION)**

- Works closely with and maintains regular contact with staff liaison.
- Coordinates events in region. (Two events per calendar year are recommended)
- Attends events (both volunteer driven and University driven) and assists with welcoming attendees, tracking attendance, handing out nametags, and introducing speakers.
- Recruits other volunteers.
- Strongly encouraged to attend Homecoming Weekend activities on-campus.
- Generally commits to serving as representative for one year.
- Maintains official regional alumni Facebook group, along with the staff liaison.
- Become familiar with the demographics of the alumni and parents within their region.
- Point person for all regional activity.
- Shares any updated contact information received from alumni and parents with the staff liaison.

### **RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

The Office of Alumni and Parent Relations is committed to serving regional groups and the volunteers who make regional activities possible. Staff liaisons are available to provide information, assistance, and guidance including:

- Providing confidential lists of alumni and parents by regional area.
- Taking replies (on-line registration system) for events and producing the attendee list and nametags for an event.
- Designing, editing, and coordinating regional event emails.

- Promoting regional events on the alumni website and in other campus publications.
- Event programming suggestions.
- Providing Wesleyan swag for events upon request.
- Providing support and framework for a regional Facebook group.
- Communication to all volunteers from Wesleyan in the form of a volunteer newsletter.

#### **REGIONAL FACEBOOK GROUPS**

Several regional areas have official Facebook groups, if your region does not, we encourage you to speak with your staff liaison to determine if a Facebook group would be helpful in communicating to alumni in your area. Regional representatives, along with a staff liaison, will serve as an administrator for the Facebook group. General communication, event promotion and building a sense of community are the goals of regional Facebook groups.

#### **REGIONAL PROGRAM AND EVENT IDEAS**

- Lectures featuring faculty or local alumni and parents
- Community Service Projects
- Young Alumni Gatherings
- Museum Exhibits, Concerts, and Theater Productions showcasing the talents of local alumni and parents
- Cultural Events (Kwanzaa, Three Kings Day, and Lunar New Year celebrations)
- Athletic Events
- Wesleyan Athletic Event Viewing Parties
- Holiday Parties
- Welcome Events for New Wesleyan Students and their Families
- Book Clubs
- Happy Hours
- Family Oriented Events
- Multi-College Events

#### **EVENT PLANNING GUIDELINES**

Regional Representatives should keep in touch regularly with their staff liaison to coordinate planning for local events, but the tips listed below should help you create effective programs in your area.

- **PLAN AHEAD** – plan a schedule of events for a semester, or even a year, at a time.
- **CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE** – schedule a variety of events in different locations that will appeal to various groups of people.

- **SHARE RESPONSIBILITY** – while the regional representative has significant responsibility for guiding group activities, he/she should delegate responsibility for various events to other volunteers and utilize the staff resources available.
- **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWLEDGE, EXPERTISE, AND CONNECTIONS** – become familiar with the history of your regional group; get to know former volunteers and ask their advice on what worked in the past and why. Seek out alumni and parents in your area who have special talents or expertise they can share as speakers, panelists, or performers for local events, or who may be willing to host events or have access to space for events. Reach out at each event for new volunteers.
- **KEEP USEFUL RECORDS** – with assistance from your staff liaison, build a roster of sites for events, caterers, and special alumni and parent connections. Attendance lists should be submitted to your staff liaison after each event.
- **ASK GOOD QUESTIONS WHEN SELECTING A SITE FOR AN EVENT** – whenever possible, sites for local events should be secured well in advance. Always consider where your audience lives and works, and pinpoint areas where alumni and parents are concentrated. Weekday events may be more successful in a downtown area while weekend events may be better attended in residential areas. When securing a site, consider the following questions:
  - Is there a room rental fee? Does it include use of furniture, linens, centerpieces, set-up, and takedown?
  - What is the capacity for this event?
  - Is a deposit necessary? Refundable? When due? Negotiable?
  - Can we use an outside caterer or must we use an in-house caterer? (compare costs)
  - Is alcohol allowed, and is a bartender included in caterer's costs?
  - What is the gratuity requirement?
  - What is the cost of a cash bar, open bar, or self-serve wine and beer? (compare costs)
  - Is there a table for nametags and a greeter?
  - Is there audio visual equipment available? Does it need to be outsourced? Costs?
  - What security procedures are necessary? (E.g., guest list, doorman, security guards)
  - What parking facilities are available? What is the cost? Can parking tickets be validated?
  - Is the site handicap accessible? Access to restrooms? Where are the restrooms in proximity to the function room?
  - When must we give a final number of attendees? Is there flexibility after that date?
  - Do we need to provide an insurance certificate?
  - How early can we arrive? How late can we stay?

- Will the contact person at the site be at the event?

**Request a written contract or a written confirmation for major events in public or private spaces.** Many events will not require such elaborate procedures, but most of the above questions are important to ask when planning a major function.

#### **REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE EVENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Regional representatives working with their staff liaison should determine if an event invitation should be sent through Wesleyan or by themselves.
- When feasible, personal outreach from a regional representative is preferred to invite alumni and parents to events, promote events and communicate regional activity.
- Event RSVPs' can be taken online through the Wesleyan website or as determined by the representative.
- Representatives should promote events on social media, including within the official chapter Facebook group.
- Communicate event details with the staff liaison so events can be promoted on the alumni website and other campus publications.

#### **WESLEYAN'S INVOLVEMENT IN REGIONAL EVENT PLANNING**

- Regional Representatives will be provided with a list of all alumni and current parents within the region. This list will be updated monthly.
- The Wesleyan staff liaison will provide a suggested event email template.
- Upon request Wesleyan staff can send Wesleyan swag, registration list, and blank nametags to the representative prior to an event.
- Wesleyan will promote regional events on the alumni website and within other campus publications (ex. Wesleyan Connection, volunteer newsletter).
- Staff support for event planning (setting timeline for communications such as initial invitation, reminder emails, post event emails).
- Representatives may request that Wesleyan send out event communications and take online registration for events.
- Representatives should send attendee list, event photos and a short event debrief note to their staff liaison soon after the event.

#### **FINANCING REGIONAL EVENTS**

The Office of Alumni and Parent Relations maintains a limited budget to subsidize regional events. Events should be planned carefully to minimize expenses and volunteers should work closely with their staff liaison to determine the most cost-effective way to organize the event. In some instances, guests may be required to pay a

fee to attend the event in order to offset costs of space rental, catering, and other expenses.