Howdy!

What a second quarter our division has had! As I have mentioned before, University Advancement is the most visible division at UWG. We believe that colleagues, friends, and supporters take an interest and watch what we do daily – in Carrollton, in Georgia, and across the U.S. Well, we just proved that to be incredibly true!

Football had a great run in the NCAA playoffs, and crowds of alumni and fans followed our Wolves everywhere they traveled, even as far as Pueblo, Colorado. We had about 1,200 fans cheering on the Wolves at both the Tuskegee and Valdosta games, and about 400 at the CSU – Pueblo game. We even had 300-400 travel to Cleveland, Mississippi to watch us defeat Delta State on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. As they say in the sports business, UWG fans “travel well.” Finishing up the season ranked #6 in the country, the future for Wolves football is bright. People are already lining up to buy season tickets for next year! Congratulations to Coach Hall, our players, and our Athletics staff.

Fundraising continues to roll along at a great pace. As of January 1, annual giving and major gifts programs were nearing the 75 percent mark toward our lofty FY 2015 goals. Annual giving enjoys some 400 new donors this year. Alumni network groups have now reached 10, and the Alumni Association will begin to play a role representing UWG at the legislative session this spring.

University Communications and Marketing continues to produce an ever-increasing volume of quality, award-winning work. Highlights for the past quarter include strategic development, promotion, design, and events support across the campus. Support ranged from preview days, football and basketball games, and Swing Time to commencement, and a strong showing for UCM and UA in Best of the West.

At the last Leadership Development Institute, each of the VPs was asked to share their scorecard. You may remember that I got up and said my goals for our division were simple: Win a lot of games, raise a “boatload” of money, and tell everyone about what UWG is doing. I was joking, but what you have done so far this year proves how right I was, and it is all thanks to you. Your hard work and your professionalism make me proud. We have all come a long way in the past three years, and I’m grateful for each and every one of you. Go West. Go Wolves!

Bill Estes, Ed.D.
Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of the UWG Foundation
Alumni Relations

The Alumni Relations Team (ART) is engaged with its valued volunteers to further develop alumni networks and to begin building a strong communications effort by using AlumniDen, our online community for alumni. During fall semester, events ramped way up with 32 events being completed by Dec. 31. In the previous calendar year, 28 events were hosted in Carrollton and across the country. ART has introduced a new type of relaxed event with no program. Through “conversations” over coffee or cocktails, alumni drop in at a designated area and enjoy conversations with host alumni and staff before heading on to their destination.

We enjoyed teaming up with athletics to plan away tailgate events for all Wolves fans. Events were held in Birmingham, Atlanta, Valdosta, Tuskegee, and Pueblo, Colorado. From a 30,000-feet view, the Alumni staff collectively has worked toward a comprehensive approach to goal setting by involving volunteer leadership in helping craft one 5-year strategic plan that the Alumni Association and the Alumni Relations programs can execute together.

Other lofty initiatives include a continued effort to measure and increase alumni engagement and to develop additional collaborative partnerships such as the one with Career Services. During Spring Break, students will shadow alumni and friends to learn more about a particular career and work environment. The event is called Student Externship Program. Another Career Services partnership will address feedback that was garnered through a focus group of seniors. This program will be called Backpack to Briefcase and will delve into the transition from student to career professional.

The Alumni Association has partnered with Southern Credit Union for support of a new affinity credit card program. The association’s other top revenue partnership with Liberty Mutual continues to grow.

Athletics

UWG Athletics would like to thank and congratulate Trina Braden on her appointment as the head coach of Wolves’ volleyball. Trina took over the program at the last possible second before the 2014 season began and did a marvelous job in displaying leadership and a positive attitude. At the conclusion of the season, the title of interim coach was removed and Trina became the head coach of the program.

Welcome to Jeremy Harrison, who was named assistant volleyball coach by Trina in January.

West Georgia has four basketball dates leading up to and on Valentine’s Day, and UWG Athletics is bringing back one of the most unique promotions in the Bear Toss. Fans are encouraged to bring stuffed animals to each of the games on February 5, 7, 12, and 14 and be prepared to toss them onto the court at halftime. The bears are then distributed to the Pediatric and Maternity Floors at Tanner Medical Center as well as to the Carrollton Police department to give to children who are facing a difficult time or as a gift for a newborn child.
One of the highlights of the year for many of the UWG student-athletes comes this year on March 2 with Read Across America day. Last year, more than 50 athletes and coaches visited schools across Carroll County on Dr. Seuss’s birthday to read to schoolchildren and deliver a stay-in-school message as well.

The Second Annual WESTPY Awards are coming up on May 14. It will be a fantastic evening where UWG fans, athletes, and coaches come together to honor the best and brightest from the 2014-15 athletic year.

Back for a sixth straight year, the ARAMARK Wolves Kickoff Classic has become the premier golf tournament in western Georgia. This year's event will be held at Oak Mountain Championship Golf Club on Friday, July 24.

Development

Our development group finished the calendar year strong with $4.6 million in gifts and pledges secured from July 1 to December 31, 2014. Our talented team, with help of our advancement colleagues and academic partners, achieved 77 percent of our fiscal year goal with six months remaining. The restructure of our Legacy Giving program is reaping rewards with $2.7 million in planned gifts booked since July 1. Every member of our major gifts team has secured at least one legacy gift in the last 12 months!

Much work was done in the last several months to prepare for our upcoming comprehensive campaign. Input was received from the campus community to draft our campaign case for support that will be tested with a select group of university donors and alumni. Our campaign consultant has conducted training with our Foundation Board of Trustees, university leadership, Alumni Relations and Development staff, and policies and procedures have been drafted or revised in preparation. This spring, our campaign consultant will conduct a campaign strategy study to determine if there is a strong consensus for the projects contained in our case for support and if the priorities match the interests of our key donors. In late spring or early summer, the report will be submitted to the Foundation Board of Trustees along with a recommended campaign goal.

Events

Danielle Tackett has been busy planning signature events and working with community leaders to take advancement-related events to a whole new level. Below are events she planned in Fall with a look at what’s on the horizon for spring semester.

- Annual President’s Luncheon on October 30 provided an opportunity for UWG donors to meet the students who were being impacted by their gifts
- The November 7 LDI retreat continued focus on individual leadership development and implementation by equipping leaders with specific, usable tools in the areas of goal setting, strategic planning, assessment, and continuous improvement.
- Grand opening of UWG’s Center for Adult Learners and Veterans on Veterans Day, Nov. 11
- Lunch in the Presidential Suite with donors from Scholarship Gala at the $3,000 level, Nov. 17
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources Board Meeting on Dec. 2: Dinner with mayor at the Depot and dessert at Richie Bland’s house
April Saunders is now an adjunct professor in the UWG Department of Art.

Congratulations to UCM Student Assistant Charles Robinson on his graduation. Charles is now working as a temporary employee assisting UCM in creating a diverse array of multimedia student-based projects.

Raven Mackey, a student intern with the communications team, opened and is managing the official University Pinterest page and will be rolling out a “Pin it to win it” contest in February to generate more followers. Julie Lineback has added a Pinterest icon to the bottom of each page of the Perspective Online.

UCM welcomes Amy Lavender on Monday, Feb. 9, as Communications Specialist – Senior.

Stay-tuned for the publishing of the Spring issue of Perspective magazine later this March.

Social Media

Linked In-Company: 4,368 Followers
Linked In-University: 27,231 Followers
Pinterest: 46 Followers
Facebook: 18,349 Likes
Twitter: 2,212 Followers
Instagram: 454 Followers

University Communications and Marketing

UCM continues to delight in serving as the central storyteller for UWG through the creation of vibrant graphics, words, and emotive video. There are so many great stories to tell of meaningful research, scholarly achievement, creative expression, and service to humanity. During the past quarter, our plate was once again full! A sprinkling of highlights showcasing our bustling coverage, creative successes, and support across campus is noted below:

• Participated in the November 2014 Leadership Development Institute
• Embraced professional development through attendance at the Georgia Education Advancement Council conference and other continuing education opportunities
• Became more enlightened through attending mind-opening discussions in the Courageous Conversations series
• Taught graphic design and photography classes to UWG students and community members
• Taught student and graduate assistants the value and reward of experiential learning
• Produced two Best of the West divisional winners in UCM
• Worked with the president’s office to create points of pride to showcase monthly accomplishments from UWG colleges, schools, or student, staff, faculty member, or alumnus
• Provided coverage, promotion, design, and live events production for the winning Wolves football season, with staff traveling as far away as Pueblo, Colorado to document and capture Wolves history in the making
• Produced comprehensive support for UWG’s large campus preview day as well as support for four campus preview day “road shows” through integrated marketing efforts achieved with our Admissions partners
• Covered December commencement; created the program; and served on the committee
• Energized the Swing Time dance event and invited the UWG campus and area community to the World War II exhibit at UWG’s Ingram Library (Xiaojuan Christian and her husband Phillip are pictured below)
• Supported “Cans for a Cause,” which donated 4,048 food items to the Carroll County Soup Kitchen

• Honored and invited in adult and veteran learners by creating a UWG home for them

• Embraced signage and other marketing opportunities in preparation of the fall opening of UWG Newnan’s new center

• Collaborated with the City of Carrollton on a joint marketing opportunity

• Had a little fun, too, at our “festive holiday sweater” party!

• Got back to business in January by making positive strides in metric-minded results

The UCM team continues to uncover hidden gems and to ensure that our stories and messages reach deserving students, attract and retain top faculty and staff, and garner positive attention across the state and beyond. Go West. Go Wolves!