

**University of West Georgia Alumni Association**  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
November 2, 2019, 10 A.M.  
UWG Food Services Bldg, Hubbard Dining Room

**Members Present:** Steve Anthony, Ashlyn Arp, Philip Cochran, Michael Davis, Laura Garland, Greg Goodlett, Melanie Hildebrandt, Danielle Jenkins, Wanda Johnson, Jason Kennedy, Allison Key, Lisa King, Michael McDowell, Wanda McGukin, Brad Mock, Artagus Newell, Donnie Newsom, Brian Nichols, Terie Phillips, Judy Rowell, Christopher Sanders, Peggy Smith, Tracey Thompson, Donald Walker, Robert York

**Members Absent:** Ashley Bush, Joy Butler, Abbie Collie, Nancy Frank, Amy Goolsby, Melanie Lambert, Semeka Samuels, Rob Sparks, Troy Vollenweider, Dexter Williams,

**Past Presidents/Chairpersons Present:** Jason Thogmartin

**Staff/Others Present:** Dr. Micheal Crafton, Interim President, Jami Bower, Interim VP Advancement, Ali Rosborough, Allyson Bretch, Denice Perdue

- I. **Call to Order and Welcome** by Board Chairperson, Melanie Hildebrandt, at 10:03 a.m.
- II. **Reading and Approval of Minutes**, Secretary Wanda McGukin. Motion by Christopher Sanders, second by Brad Mock to dispense with reading of July 20, 2019 minutes (Motion carried). No changes or corrections noted. Motion by Donnie Newsom, second by Philip Cochran to accept minutes as submitted. (Motion carried.)
- III. **University Staff, Board Officer, and Committee Reports**

**Interim President's Update** Dr. Crafton extended greetings to all and opened comments with update on Presidential search with hopes that by end of year or early 2020, a new president will be announced. Expressed appreciation for Alumni Council support through all of the transition. Commencement in December will again feature a record number of graduates. Mike Dugan will be commencement speaker for the 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. ceremonies on December 14. Fall Preview Day is tomorrow (November 3, 2019) and about 1,000 students are expected. Segued into discussion regarding UWG enrollment—record enrollment last year, fairly significant downturn this year, still a record number of graduate student enrollment. The undergraduate downturn was more than could be made up by the graduate enrollment increase. Diligent efforts being made to figure out what and why the numbers are down as a record enrollment had been projected. Outreach and recruiting are being adjusted in efforts to boost enrollment. The good economy plays a role in our lower numbers as jobs are easier to find. The enrollment decrease is a national trend. Kennesaw State University continues to enroll record numbers (including many of ours) as well as Georgia State University (specifically transfer students from UWG).

Georgia State's admission requirements are lower than what we have because of their consolidation with Georgia Perimeter College, which created an institution within an institution. Georgia State, Kennesaw, unemployment has all played a role in our enrollment drop. Technical colleges are experiencing similar drops, as well. A question was posed if Georgia Highlands was impacting our enrollment. Dr. Crafton doesn't think so. Dr. Crafton mentioned the Carroll County Education Collaborative and the exchange of information and collaboration. Retention is a big piece of the pie with this, as reflected in the number of students who return to UWG after their first year. This number has decreased. Research indicates those students have either not returned to college anywhere or have enrolled at a two-year school. Comment and question raised about "doom and gloom" letter sent to faculty/staff the day before (Nov 1, 2019). Dr. Crafton said the letter was from him and his intention was to share facts with the campus and what the potential impact could be, it wasn't intended to be a "doom and gloom" letter. If enrollment is down as much next year as this year, there likely will be some significant impacts. Already looking at 4 percent cuts this year and 6 percent next year. Enrollment for fall 2019 is 13,244; fall 2018 was 13,733. A drop of 500 students is significant. As recent as August, all the indicators were a record enrollment. A comment was made that the quality of graduates coming out of UWG is outstanding. Dr. Crafton was appreciative of the comment and said UWG is unique in many regards from other campuses and appealing, employment records of our students/graduates are high. Median starting salary of our graduates is higher than our competitors and these are things that I plan to share during my talk at Preview Day. Dr. Crafton requested Alumni Council members to share any positive experiences as a result of their time at UWG that he could incorporate into his talking points to parents and students.

Great Homecoming, Theme was Out of this World and the week was very busy. Record number attending, raised \$80,000 at Gala; raised \$586,875 for ADay; Homecoming King and Queen, Aaron Ashton and Ashley Dorsey were crowned at half time.

Facilities update, Ribbon cutting for NPHC Garden, structure with 9 pillars honoring the nine traditional African American fraternities represented on UWG campus.

Groundbreaking for the new Roy Richards, Sr. College of Business, 70,000 square foot facility. Massive undertaking, destruction of Watson Hall almost complete. Very nice program at groundbreaking. Jim Richards represented Richards family and spoke of the connection between his family and UWG.

Groundbreaking for new baseball field delayed due to contractual discussions. Baseball field will be located adjacent to football stadium with Homeplate backing up to Wolf statue. Some discussion of how seating will be configured at old field due to old seating being declared unsafe and temporary bleachers will be necessary for 2020 season.

Football game with Mississippi College today, we will be recognizing 1982 Championship Football Team. Some players being inducted into Hall of Fame.

1982 was significant year for West Georgia as ADAy was started, football team won national championship, and was first year Dr. Crafton began working here as a lecturer in English Department.

**Board Chairperson's Report (Melanie Hildebrandt)**, the Executive Committee met this past week in advance of today's meeting, talked extensively about committees and getting started on work for the year. Moving forward, we will not have Alumni Weekend any longer. We will hold an Awards event annually in the spring as well as focusing more on Homecoming in the fall.

Legacy Scholarship, we work with the Admissions Office to help streamline process. There are two recipients this year, Heather Sibley from Moreland, GA (Health and Community major--COE) and Trevor Meadows from Grantville, GA (no specific major yet but classified as Med major-STEM).

Melanie encouraged AC to direct donations or some portion to the Legacy Scholarship. Also urged donations so AC has 100%-member contribution.

**Executive Director's Report (Ali Rosborough)** Expressed thanks to her team during the incredibly busy time (events including tailgates, Thriving Under Thirty, Thirsty Thursdays). Staff have worked tirelessly days, nights, weekends as they have worked with one less staff member to accomplish everything. Specifically mentioned Allyson Bretch and Denise Perdue. A new Strategic Communications Director was introduced, Lauren Ledbetter, five years of communications experience. Will focus significantly in alumni communications strategies working closely with UCM.

Good response to fall survey. Will be diving deeper into the responses and will present an update at Feb meeting.

Alumni Council meetings will be held in different facilities across campus so that we have greater exposure to the different areas, capital improvements, hearing from the deans. Stay tuned for announcement of February 1, 2020 meeting location.

Shout out to committee chairs. Michael Davis recognized for his success in getting AC members to help with tailgate setup/tear down and hosting responsibilities. Steve Anthony and Tracey Thompson, too, thanks for the great work your committees are doing.

**Board Treasurer's Report (Philip Cochran)**, reviewed written reports that each Council member received at sign in.

#### IV. **Committee Reports**

- a. **Alumni Awards (Tracey Thompson)** good meeting and planning for blending the alumni awards and Thriving Under Thirty processes. Online nominations can be made year-round on website. Committee will be meeting in January to begin process of alumni awards selection. Thriving Under Thirty process remains the same except it will be moved from fall to summer to avoid conflict with football.

Chris Sanders has agreed to serve as Co-chair for the Alumni Awards Committee.

- b. Alumni Engagement (Michael Davis)** Thanks to everyone for coming out and helping especially with tailgates, particularly Homecoming when it was raining. Over 100 signed in at the HC tailgate but estimate is higher than sign-ins. Fantastic turnout with 11 or 12 Board members attending, too. Thanks to volunteers who helped with the Belk's event in partnership with Career Services, as well. Danielle Jenkins & Wanda McGukin assisted Ali with sign in at the Alumni table for this event, which seems to have been successful and will be held again. Over 100 students attended as well as 10-15 alums. Committee discussed ideas to further involvement. Jason Kennedy will service as Vice Chair of Engagement Committee.
- c. Board Development (Steve Anthony)** Two main topics of committee meeting this morning- 1) enhancing the application process for people wanting to serve on the Board, expectations of serving, and 2) discussed what happens when not selected to serve on the Board. In the not too distant past, there would be 30-40 applicants to serve, but the last two years there have been over 100 applicants to fill 13-15 slots typically open. What can we do to keep these unselected people engaged? Steve plans to meet with Ali and Jami to discuss approach to this. New terms start July 1. Online application is open year-round. Need to update website to state the selection process begins in the spring. Discussed keeping diverse Board and diversity in selection process, staying attuned to meeting attendance and how to approach when member has missed meetings, outreach to determine if individual is still interested in serving. Discussed the importance of AC member contributions to the annual fund. No set amount required, just to ensure members are committed and meeting obligation to the AC for 100% participation. Chairperson Hildebrandt reminded Steve and committee of change of AC member size no longer has to be 36, it can be less. However, need to finesse the process related to this.

## V. New Business

**Brand Presentation (Jami Bower), UCM** worked hard to freshen the UWG brand. We will not be letting go of the "GO WEST" slogan. Since the brand launch, UWG experienced a 20 percent increase in enrollment. Some of the new ideas might look a bit edgy because target market is 15-18-year old's, other more relatable. Trying to appeal to a wide range of prospective students. The new Go West video was shown. Jami Bower went over the strategy brainstorming sessions to determine what Admissions is doing, our application process, audiences targeted, and surveyed a 10-county area surrounding Carrollton campus. Currently working on perception – what people think of us. Our marketing footprint has expanded to include Birmingham and Jacksonville, AL areas (out of state tuition waiver area). We

have to work harder to get our message out because of the competition (Kennesaw, Georgia Southern, others). Position ourselves that we are individual-specific and the best in what we do. Need to continue to tell our story in new way, using technology.

Massive website update in progress. Hope to launch in March 2020.

**Other:**

Peggy Smith announced that Board member Lisa King was featured in the local West Georgia Woman magazine this month.

VI. **Old Business** None

**NEW BOARD PHOTOS (Group and headshots) WILL BE TAKEN AT FEBRUARY 1, 2020 MEETING. Wear your Alumni Council shirt or colors.**

VII. **Adjourn** Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Submitted by Wanda McGukin, Secretary