ROLE OF THE ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE

THE ALTRUISTIC APPROACH
To «serve» anyone who has a relationship with the University and would like to maintain that relationship.

THE «CYNICAL» APPROACH
To «involve» anyone who has the possibility to support the University in any way.
The University should and must maintain a close relationship with its alumni because:

- They *certify* the academic programs of the institution
- They promote the University to potential students
- They create a network of volunteers
- They offer the connection between the content of the academic programs being offered (teaching) with research
- They offer their support and they create *goodwill* $\Rightarrow$ *they are the keepers of the University's reputation*

For the alumni, the University is part of their identity.

The University and its alumni are eternal partners
A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP

1. Financial and other support of alumni activities
   • Participation encouragement

2. Promotion of the University
   • Recommendation to potential students
   • Financial support/donations
   • Their children – our future students

3. Reputation enhancement
   • Attraction of excellent students and staff
   • Better research
   • Better funding/budget

4. Advanced services and activities
   • Better alumni network
   • Better relationship with the alumni

MUTUAL BENEFIT
The development of good relations between an academic institution and its alumni is a long term investment which entails benefits for the institution beyond any financial contribution... the alumni comprise the most important stakeholder group for an institution's future.
The Alumni Relations Office can promote better its goals when:

- Our efforts support the University’s strategic goals
- Our efforts promote the best interests of the alumni
- We participate in the inner management circle of our University in order to
  - Provide strategic counseling to the leadership
  - Convey the viewpoints and interests of the alumni
  - Participate in the formulation of institutional policies
- We base our work on research that informs our understanding of the institution’s alumni and measures progress toward established goals in support of our institution and our alumni
- We undertake multiple programs for reaching and engaging alumni
- We utilize a wide spectrum of communication devices
- We seek feedback from the alumni to help align services with existing and emerging needs

Source: CASE, Principles of practice for Alumni Relations Professionals at Educational Institutions
ALUMNI PARTICIPATION LEVELS

For a 10-year program:

- **Active members** (6%)
  - They are donors, volunteers, leaders

- **Members who respond** (12%)
  - They respond to surveys, visit the website, come to events

- **Passive** (82%)
HOW CAN WE ENGAGE THE ALUMNI

- By offering benefits and offers
- By giving them the possibility to communicate with each other
- By informing them of new developments and news that have to do with the University and might concern them
- By ensuring the University’s support towards the alumni
- By giving them the opportunity to support the University

Relationship circle between the alumni and the University
Every alumni group is different and thus our strategy should differentiate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>How</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educate</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>• Our goal is to create <strong>awareness</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create a volunteer group from the student group</td>
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<td>• Get students to know the alumni</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Participate in their activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Young alumni</td>
<td>• Our goal is <strong>participation</strong></td>
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<td>(up to 20 years from</td>
<td>• Regular contact/information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>graduation)</td>
<td>• Events</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Try to maintain a relationship with the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Older alumni</td>
<td>• Our goal is to secure their <strong>support</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(more than 20 years</td>
<td>• Invite them to participate in Councils and Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from graduation)</td>
<td>• Professional and personal support</td>
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OUT TOOLS

What tools can we use in order to achieve our goals?

• The first and most important tools is a functional and updated data base!
• Organize events,
• Invite alumni to participate in Committees and Councils of the University,
• Maintain a periodic communication with the alumni via exclusive electronic and printed publications,
• Offer services, and
• Personal contact.

If the programs and services that we offer to our alumni are not relevant to them, then the University is considered to be outdated.
EVENTS: University of Cyprus
OFFERS: BENEFITS PACKAGE

• The benefits aim at stimulating the alumni to participate in the University’s activities, approaching them for the various goals of the Alumni Relations Office and reuniting them with their alma mater.
**Alumnus magazine**

The magazine is distributed for free to all alumni with an active address. It is biannual and contains information about University news, research and interviews with alumni.
Our mascot: Sophia the bee

- The creation of a mascot was an idea of the Alumni Relations Office of the University of Cyprus in an attempt to give an image and a vision to the activities that concern students and alumni alike.
- Mascots help people associate an event or other activity with positive emotions, they are attractive to families, they create pleasant memories and attract/amuse the audience.
TO SUM UP...

• An Alumni Relations Office should have
  o A budget,
  o A plan,
  o An events program,
  o Staff!
  o Publish news bulleting, magazines or other publication exclusively for the alumni,
  o A website and other electronic means of communication (e.g. facebook page),
  o A database
And, it should maintain contact with alumni and students.

• It should cooperate closely with the Fundraising/Development Office, Public Relations/Communications Office, Marketing Office, Faculties, the Alumni Association and the higher management of the University.

• The Alumni Relations Office should be a integral part of any University´s management structure. It is the connecting part with the University´s history but also a means of progress and change.

THANK YOU