Illinois State University
Alumni Network Handbook

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Alumni Association Mission

The mission of the Illinois State University Alumni Association is to support the University through the knowledge, skills, financial resources, and loyalty of its alumni; to communicate and interpret the University’s goals and achievements to others; and to promote a spirit of unity and loyalty among former students and friends.

The Alumni Association motto is to serve, advise, advocate and strengthen.

Alumni Networks Purpose & Mission

Alumni networks, whether they meet face to face or online, are a critical link between alumni and the University while providing opportunities for Illinois State alumni to maintain an active role in the life of the institution. Alumni networks are vital to the work of Illinois State.

The purpose and goals of Illinois State University alumni networks are:

To establish and maintain a closer connection between Illinois State University and its alumni and friends.

Alumni networks are an important way for alumni to stay connected to and support the University; the University needs a strong network of alumni who can provide support for University goals and programs.

To advance the interests and welfare of the University and today’s students.

Alumni networks are a way for alumni to show support for Illinois State and for today’s students. This ongoing connection between past, present, and future students helps keep the University strong.

Promote alumni participation in the development and advancement of the institution through financial support.

Through alumni network involvement, alumni can give back to the University some of what they were given through their educational experiences. Alumni may choose to support student scholarships, academic programs, or other University initiatives.

To provide a variety of opportunities for Illinois State alumni to interact with each other while engaging with Illinois State in a meaningful way.

Participation in alumni network activities can provide alumni with a variety of social, philanthropic, and networking opportunities, as well as access to continuing education and career enhancement programs.

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What Makes A Successful Alumni Network?

A successful alumni network is one that provides opportunities for Illinois State alumni to maintain an active role in the life of the University. The Alumni Network will provide programs that attract a diverse group of alumni while maintaining a meaningful connection to Illinois State.

Alumni networks can be established based on a variety of different factors, including:
- Affinity with a specific school, department or major at Illinois State (for example, Finance majors or the School of Communication)
- Professional industry (educators, attorneys, etc.)
- Geographic concentration (Dallas area; Peoria, Phoenix Area, etc.)
- Ethnic affinity (ISU Black Colleagues Association, Latino Alumni Network)
- Campus organization (Alumni Band)
- Stage of life (young alumni, Half Century Club)

Priorities & Sample Activities

Plan and implement at least one networking opportunity each year that accomplishes one or a combination of the following. Sample activities are listed under each priority. Please note - it is not necessary or expected that a network will cover all of the purposes in a given year.

- Provide networking opportunities or professional development for alumni.
  - Serve as a “network leader” and become an ambassador of Illinois State University for Redbird alumni who are new to your region. It may involve a welcome letter/email, an invitation to a welcome event, or a networking opportunity via an online network. You may be asked to provide suggestions for safe neighborhoods to live, input on schools, recommendations for local involvement, etc.
  - Provide alumni with an opportunity to exchange business cards and get to know fellow Redbirds
  - Speaker/Faculty Presentation Events ~ Invite an Illinois State faculty member or administrator to speak regarding a particular topic of interest (financial planning, agriculture research, etc).
  - Provide alumni with an opportunity to hear a keynote speaker and network with other alumni in a particular field, industry, or company.
Priorities & Sample Activities cont.

- **Assist in recruiting students to Illinois State University**
  - Tell your Illinois State story in your community and help “State your Passion” to future Redbirds. Learn more about the latest facts and figures at IllinoisState.edu/PointsOfPride.

- **Promote current student interaction with alumni**
  - Coordinate an alumni panel around a particular topic and invite a current student group to attend and network with the participating alumni.
  - Co-sponsor a tailgate tent prior to a football game with a current student organization.
  - Invite current student leaders to attend events or join in networking conversations.

- **Fundraise to support student scholarships, academic programs or other University initiatives**
  - Plan an event to raise support for current Illinois State students! You could raise money for a specific project or general scholarships, or even a scholarship for a student from your particular area (*in order to make sure all donations are allocated appropriately, make sure to involve the Illinois State Foundation in the process of planning this type of event*).
  - Host an intimate gathering to share exciting giving or volunteer opportunities with a targeted group of fellow alumni.

- **Network leaders serve as local ambassadors to their area to assist alumni or student interns who are new to that area**
  - Be willing to share your phone number and email to Redbird family members who might need guidance as they move and adjust to a new region.
  - Offer to make recommendations on safe places to live, favorite spots to eat and shop, things to do and see in the area, and other pertinent details only a local would know. Redbirds helping Redbirds- it’s what we are all about!

- **Offer community service opportunities to strengthen the campus and/or alumni community ties**
  - Volunteer with important Illinois State programs on campus such as Homecoming, Move-in Weekend, Commencement, and many others.
  - Volunteer at a local food bank or soup kitchen and provide lunch for all of the alumni volunteers who participate.

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Priorities & Sample Activities cont.

- Embrace diversity and alumni affinities as a means to strengthen the alumni connection to each other and Illinois State.
  - Host an event in a unique venue, such as a local museum or theatre, with a special ISU reception highlighting related alumni or campus accomplishments.
  - Connect your online network with other online groups, sharing a pride in and affiliation with Illinois State University (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram).

- Advocate on behalf of the University—Spread the Red!
  - Redbird Legacy Events – Host a family-friendly event that gives alumni an opportunity to share their pride in Illinois State with their children and grandchildren. It’s never too early to start recruiting future Redbirds!
  - Celebrate the success of Redbird athletics! Organize a football or basketball watch party – invite alumni to get together to watch a televised Redbirds athletic game/match at a local bar, restaurant or someone’s home.
  - Keep other alumni informed. Help promote exciting events, programs and successes at Illinois State through an event or online network.
  - Create a social or professional networking group, specific to your network, online. Reggie is very popular on Facebook and Twitter – he always loves adding new friends! (Some helpful suggestions are provided on page 11-12).
  - Host a dinner gathering to reacquaint fellow alumni with Illinois State and/or their college.
  - Pass along the “You’ve Been Spotted” cards to identify yourself as an Illinois State volunteer and encourage others to connect with you or the University for future involvement opportunities.
  - Participate in the annual Homecoming Parade and other festivities.

Show your Redbird Pride by wearing this pin courtesy of the Illinois State University Alumni Association

Spotted by __________________________ your fellow Redbird
Phone/email ______________________
Contact me if you’re interested in connecting with Illinois State alumni in our area.

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**Alumni Network Leadership**

It is important that each alumni network function as a team, preferably with a leadership committee as its core. While it is possible to run a network with just one person in this leadership role, a strong leadership committee could consist of four or five individuals and provides cohesion and support for Illinois State generated programs and partnerships.

This leadership committee is free to decide how they would like to divide up responsibilities or projects. For example, volunteers may choose to assign responsibilities based on specific events or roles within the group (secretary, communications, etc).

Please keep in mind that the goal of the leadership committee is to coordinate activities, networking opportunities, and programs that will attract a diverse group of alumni while maintaining a meaningful connection to Illinois State. The active volunteers should work with Alumni Relations to maintain periodic communication with their targeted audience through event invitations, e-mail updates, etc. See page 10 for details on promotions and communication.

It is also expected, but not mandatory, that all members of the leadership committee will commit to making an annual gift to Illinois State (at any level). While made through the University’s Foundation, gifts can be designated to any area or program within the University, including the Athletic Department’s Weisbecker Scholarship Fund, a particular school or academic department, scholarships, etc. Participation from the leadership committee sets an example for other alumni and makes a statement that the Network supports Illinois State.
Role of Alumni Relations in Supporting a Network

The Illinois State University Alumni Relations office is here to support you in connecting to the campus community and to other Illinois State alumni around the country. As alumni, you play a crucial role in the success of the University and in sustaining Illinois State traditions and pride with other alumni and future generations of Redbirds.

A designated member of the Alumni Relations Office will partner with you to offer support, advice and guidance for your outreach efforts. You can expect assistance with the following:

- Connect you with existing networks around your areas of interest and affinity.
- Promote events, meetings and networking opportunities.
- Assist in collaborating with University Marketing and Communications (UMC) on any images or logos needed by the network. To maintain a consistent University brand, all logos must follow the graphic standards provided by UMC.
- Support a webpage to provide information about alumni network’s programs/events and how to become involved.
- Provide event planning assistance:
  - Provide an event kit that will include: nametags, giveaways, brochures, program ideas and tools.
  - Post event details on the Illinois State website and include them in the alumni magazine (as deadlines allow).
  - Coordinate emailed invitations. Assist with mailed invitations when time and budget allow.
  - Collect RSVP information and provide it to the steering committee.
  - Help in coordinating a program for the events (e.g. secure faculty/staff or alumni speakers, Q & A, etc).
  - Assist in sending a follow-up thank you note after the event.
- Provide access to monthly alumni e-newsletter for marketing of networking opportunities and activities (as deadlines and space allow).
- Review all contracts and agreements with any vendors. Alumni Relations must review each document to ensure that all arrangements are in compliance with Illinois State University policies and procedures. Alumni Relations must sign off on all legal documents regarding alumni network events.
- Attend events, steering committee meetings and online conversations, whenever possible. Also, when appropriate, help recruit current students and representatives from campus to participate.

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Guidelines

Policies

- All events, whether face-to-face or online, must comply with relevant University, Foundation and Alumni Association policies.

- Alcohol may be served at events, but must comply with the University and Alumni Association Alcohol Policies, found at http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/health-safety/5-1-20.shtml

- All contracts need to be signed by an Alumni Relations staff member. Contracts signed by a volunteer will not be honored by the University.

- Each alumni activity or networking opportunity must comply with the mission of the ISU Alumni Association. Activities should focus on promoting the University to students or future students, foster education, encourage networking, or incorporate philanthropy towards Illinois State.

Procedures

- All invitations, publications, emails, communications, artwork, etc. bearing the University name, seal or other logos must be approved by University Marketing and Communications or the Alumni Relations Office. Networks are asked to only to use University images and logos that have been approved by the University’s marketing department.

- Please notify the University of any address, phone, email or employment information updates for alumni in your area. Many groups collect updated information through business card drawings for Illinois State giveaways.

- Provide up-to-date lists of leadership committee members and other network members.

- Contact Alumni Relations prior to planning any events.

- The Illinois State University Alumni Association retains the authority to discontinue or not formally recognize alumni networks. Reasons may include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) the actions of an existing or emerging alumni network are deemed to be detrimental to the University, its students or other alumni or 2) the existing or emerging alumni networks are not in alignment with Alumni Relations or association priorities.

Promotions

The Alumni Relations Office will assist with promotions for the group and their various activities through our website, alumni magazine, electronic communications and internal campus communications. If a printed invitation is warranted and budget is approved, university policies, style, and procedures will be used to format, edit, and print.

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Your alumni network will need to plan according to the necessary timeline for each promotional vehicle. The alumni magazine’s promotion schedule requires text to be due approximately six months prior to the publication date. Text should be submitted two weeks prior for an electronic communication.

Budget

Events and all other networking opportunities should be planned on a cost-recovery basis. This means that all expenses (including promotional expenses and follow-up expenses) should be incorporated into the event/activity fee. All monies must be collected by Alumni Relations.

There may be alumni within the network who have access to resources to help defray the cost of an event or provide a meeting facility at no cost (e.g. a club membership, conference room at their place of business, etc). These resources should be explored and utilized whenever possible. Contributors should be obtained in time to permit appropriate recognition. Alumni Relations must be notified of contributions and foundation policies need to be followed if the donor would like to receive gift-in-kind credit.

The following items should be taken into consideration:

- facility usage charges; security fees
- food costs
- tax, gratuity and service charges
- bar charges (cash bar is often the best plan)
- guarantees; date when final count must be provided
- catering policies about planning for additional guests without reservations (usually 5% of number of reservations)
- cancellation fees; deposit penalties

If at any point, the network leadership would like to explore including a membership donation expectation, the terms and allocations of those fees must be agreed upon by the University and the leadership of the alumni network.
Online Networks:

A popular method of alumni networking is through the use of online social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

Illinois State University has an official presence on these networks. Creation of group or fan pages on the aforementioned sites is recommended as a means to actively encourage social, geographic, and professional alumni networks. Before creating a presence for your group online, please work with your Alumni Relations liaison to ensure that there is not a duplicative group already established and to acquire any additional information to set up your network up properly.

There are a variety of methods in creating a network within these communities. We recommend:

Facebook:

Facebook is a great tool for promoting events and connecting members of your network socially. The Alumni Relations office co-manages the University’s official Facebook fan page which has over 33,000 fans (IllinoisState.edu/Facebook). Groups may ask their alumni liaison to promote events and information about their network through this page.

Should your network desire to create its own page on Facebook, please let your Alumni Relations staff representative know. You will then be connected with the social networking manager who will set-up the page on your group’s behalf. In order to follow University guidelines, any Facebook page created as an official representation of a University sponsored group, must be created by University staff. Once the page is established, the management and updating of the page will be the responsibility of the network volunteers.

LinkedIn:

A variety of groups exist on the professional networking site, LinkedIn, and this is a great place to create an online network to connect alumni with similar professional interests.

Official Illinois State University LinkedIn Group: IllinoisState.edu/LinkedIn
Official Illinois State University Alumni LinkedIn Group:
https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Illinois-State-University-Alumni-Association-55254

Things to consider when setting up an online network:

- These sites take time to manage. Please consider the amount of time you have to create, populate, maintain, and update your online network. You may wish to have a secondary manager for the profile/group profile pages to help share in the responsibility.

- Cultivation of personal information from these sites is prohibited. Volunteers representing Illinois State University must follow the terms of service of the social community and the confidentiality policy of Illinois State University.

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• Postings of a negative nature towards Illinois State University, as well as University employees, volunteers, students, alumni should be removed by the network manager immediately.

• Postings (including imagery) that do not present a positive, professional, publicly appropriate image of our alumni should also be removed.

• Creation of an online network outside of Facebook and Linked In communities may not be supported by the Alumni Relations office. Please consult your Alumni Relations staff liaison before creating an online network.
**Event Planning Timeline:**

If your network chooses to coordinate a face-to-face event(s) as a component of its outreach plans, below you will find a timeline to assist in the planning process.

2-3 months in advance:
- Contact Alumni Relations to discuss event or project priorities and goals
- Confirm event date(s) with the Alumni Relations liaison.
- Reserve location/facilities for the activity.
- Outline event budget.
- Begin discussing the marketing plan and event logistics.
- Discuss including information in alumni magazine.

1-2 months in advance:
- Finalize logistical details. Make sure all contracts are signed by Alumni Relations.
- Assign specific volunteer duties: taking reservations, budget management, food arrangements, decorations, photography, special guests, marketing, etc.
- Make contacts with fellow alumni to drive participation.
- Final approval on promotions plan.

3-4 weeks in advance:
- Set final agenda or program for the event. Alumni Relations can assist with this process.
- Confirm arrangements with all vendors.
- Work with Alumni Relations to communicate final details to all VIPs and event registrants.

Post event:
- Share any photos taken with Alumni Relations so they may be pulled together in an online slideshow or used in future publications.
- Provide a final attendance list to Alumni Relations - who did and did not attend the event?
- Share any updated contact information collected, perhaps through a business card drawing for Illinois State giveaways.
- Share any interesting or fun stories that might be appropriate for coverage in the alumni magazine or e-newsletter

Additional Considerations:
- In order to promote an event in the alumni magazine, the initial details must be decided far enough in advance to fit within the magazine’s production schedule, usually 6 months prior to the event.
- To ensure the participation of University faculty, Deans, or staff, groups are encouraged to schedule early. These individuals’ calendars fill up quickly and should be given as much advance notice as possible.

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**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Does every graduate of Illinois State University automatically become a member of the Alumni Association?**
Yes, Illinois State’s Alumni Association does not have a dues requirement so all alumni automatically become members upon graduation. All graduates are eligible to receive the alumni magazine, the alumni e-newsletter, event invitations, etc.

**Can an alumni network charge membership fees in order to have more events?**
If at any point, the network leadership would like to explore including a dues-paying expectation, the allocations of those fees must be agreed upon by the University and the leadership of the alumni network.

**How can I obtain a list of alumni?**
Lists can be provided to identify network leaders, at the discretion of Alumni Relations, on an as-needed basis for the sole purpose of supporting the University and affiliated networks. Identified network leaders must sign the confidentiality agreement on page 18 before any information is provided by Alumni Relations.

**Where do I go to make sure I have the most current information about the University to share with other alumni?**
Contact Alumni Relations to make sure the University has your up-to-date information. This will ensure that you will receive campus updates, the alumni magazine, and the monthly e-newsletter. Alumni Relations will be happy to provide brochures and fliers for any events that your network hosts. Also, quite a bit of information can be found on many Illinois State resources:
- [IllinoisState.edu](http://IllinoisState.edu)
- [Alumni.IllinoisState.edu](http://Alumni.IllinoisState.edu)
- [IllinoisState.edu/STATEside](http://IllinoisState.edu/STATEside)

**Will Illinois State send a representative to our events?**
Yes, whenever possible, a representative from Alumni Relations will attend your events and participate in your steering committee meetings. Also, when appropriate, your Alumni Relations liaison will assist in recruiting current students and/or appropriate administrators from campus to attend the event.

**Is Alumni Relations able to off-set the cost of our events?**
Resources are limited, and the cost of key programs such as publishing the Illinois State alumni magazine continue to rise. Whenever possible, events should be planned to proceed self-funded.

**What types of alumni networks already exist?**
There are a number of established alumni networks that are based on various affinities, for example: Peoria alumni, Chicago West alumni, Latino Alumni Network, Alumni Band, and more.

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Are there other ways to get involved that do not require forming a network?
Yes, definitely! There are a number of other ways to become involved with your alma mater. Contact Alumni Relations at (309) 438-2586 or toll free (800) 366-4478 for information regarding additional volunteer opportunities.

Where should I go to find the Office of Alumni Relations when I am on campus?
Alumni Relations is located in the Illinois State University Alumni Center – a home for all alumni on campus! The Alumni Center is located at 1101 N. Main Street, Normal IL 61761. This facility has been transformed into an inviting, prominent and functional space for our alumni, students, and friends of the University. For additional information, visit: http://alumni.illinoisstate.edu/services/alumnicenter/ or call (800) 366-4478.

Where is the Illinois State Chicago office located?
The office is located downtown, at 150 N. Michigan Ave, Suite 1590, Chicago, IL 60601. It is on the corner of N. Michigan and Randolph, overlooking Millennium Park. Conference space and an informal lounge area can be reserved, free of charge to alumni. For additional information, visit ChicagoOffice.IllinoisState.edu or call (312) 251-3500.
Who would I work with in Alumni Relations?

Colleen Longo '11 – Associate Director *(Outside of Central Illinois)*
Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100
(309) 438-4343 or toll free (800) 366-4478
clongo@IllinoisState.edu

Lindsay Vahl '06, M.S. '09 – Associate Director *(Chicagoland area)*
Alumni Relations
150 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1590
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 251-3503
lmvahl@IllinoisState.edu

Jamie Sennett '99 – Director *(Central Illinois)*
Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100
(309) 438-8113 or toll free (800) 366-4478
jrsenne@IllinoisState.edu

Doris Groves ’81 – Executive Director of Alumni Engagement
Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100
Telephone: (309) 438-2586 or toll free (800) 366-4478
dfgrove@IllinoisState.edu

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Confidentiality Agreement

Purpose:

The policy for the use of Alumni and Donor Records has been created for the protection of Illinois State University, the Illinois State University Foundation and the alumni and donors to the University.

Policy:

Information about alumni, friends, and donors is maintained by Donor and Information Services within the ONE database. These records include demographic, biographical, educational, and financial information. In order to protect alumni and donor privacy, the ONE database and any information provided from it shall be used only in support of the interests of Illinois State University, the Illinois State University Alumni Association, and the Illinois State University Foundation. Proper care should be used to maintain the data’s confidentiality. It is your responsibility to assure that it is not shared with any person except in accordance with University policies.

I, ______________________________________, understand that any alumni data or mailing lists are confidential and are only compiled by Illinois State University for its exclusive purposes and those of its alumni organizations. It is not available for private purposes of any kind, including commercial solicitations or the expression of personal, political, social or economic views. I understand that this policy applies to all alumni and personnel.

__________________________  _________________________  __________________________
Signature                          Date

____________________________________
Printed Name

Revised 2/5/15
Consent for Use of Volunteer’s Name on Illinois State University’s Web Site

By signing below, I hereby give Illinois State University and its employees, permission and the right to list electronically on any part of the Illinois State Web Site, at any time in the future, my name as a volunteer for the University and my preferred email address. Further, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product. In addition, I hereby release Illinois State and its trustees, officers, employees, and representatives from any and all liability, claims, charges, complaints, or causes of action whatsoever that may arise out of or from any third-party’s use or interpretation of the electronic listing of my name.

In addition, I understand and agree that the purpose for listing my name is to give me recognition for my contributions and/or to encourage others to become volunteers at Illinois State. Moreover, I hereby execute this Consent with the intent to bind myself, my spouse (if applicable), my heirs, assigns, and legal representatives. I further state that I am at least 18 years of age and competent to sign this affirmation and release. I understand that I may rescind this consent at any time in writing.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED:

________________________________________________________________________
Signature Date

Printed Name

Approved Contact Information:

Name Degree year(s)

________________________________________________________________________
Address, City, State, Zip

Home Phone Work Phone

Cell Phone Preferred E-mail

Occupation Employer

Name, degree year, preferred email and/or phone number will be listed online, unless otherwise specified.

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