

COWBOY PARENTS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2011

The Cowboy Parents Council held its annual fall meeting on Friday, September 9, 2011, beginning at 2:00 p.m. in Room 203 of Wyoming Union on the UW campus. Brad Irion, Chair, presided. Those present included Council members –Trish Arthur, Sara Axelson (*ex officio*), Julie Balzan, Robert Balzan, Karen Blaker, Lida Citreon, Kim Condi, Jolene Freeburn, Joe Gulino, Maryalice Gulino, Dan Herlihey, Brad Irion, Carlene Irion, Kurt Kinderwater, John Rundel, Mark Vaporis, Trena Weisshaar, and Brad Wiesley; Staff – Janicca Lee and John Nutter; and Guests – Keener Fry, Executive Director of Alumni Relations; Megan Degenfelder, ASUW President; and Ty McNamee, ASUW Vice President.

Welcome: Brad convened the meeting and welcomed all members and guests and asked each to introduce himself/herself. Gifts were presented to Jolene, Trena, and Brad Wiesley in appreciation for their service on the Council, which ended with this meeting. Also leaving the Board are Pete Kuhn and Galand Thaxton. Their gifts were mailed.

Fundraising: Janicca explained that the fund raising mailer would be a letter from Robert and Julie Balzan. It will be mailed soon after Family Weekend. Follow up calls will be made in late September and early October by the UW Foundation callers. Last year the mailer brought in around \$25,000.

The Silent Auction in connection with Family Weekend will be offered again this year.

The Cowboy Parents Endowment now stands at about \$4,000. A total of \$25,000 is needed to create an official endowment. The Student Emergency Fund was used by one student thus far this fall. He received \$900 and has already repaid the money. Approximately \$7,000 is available for awarding.

Janicca provided copies of the Fiscal Year 2012 Balance Sheet and Income & Expenses Reports. She believes finances are in good shape. Donations are increasing each year and expenses are being limited.

Silent Auction: Dan reported that he has received a good cross-section of donated items, with many prior donors giving again. Set up will occur starting at 8:00 a.m. in the “pre-function” hallway. The displays will be simple and crisp. A balloon will be attached to each item. Monitors are needed for shifts during the auction. Maryalice and Vickie will monitor from 9:30 – 10:00; Lida and Kim will monitor from 10:00 – 10:30; Trish and Karen will monitor from 10:30 – 11:00. The auction closes at 11:00. Jolene, Trena, Robert, and Julie will handle checkout.

Four easels are needed for displays. Joe will bring a clothes rack to display the quilt. When the auction is concluded, the final purchase price will be added to the spreadsheet, for future reference. No credit card purchases will be accepted. An ATM machine is available on the first floor of the Union; otherwise, a purchaser can be billed. Lida offered to make arrangements for credit card charges by cell phone for next year’s auction (will cost 2% to 2.5% per purchase).

Some people feel the “Buy It Now” option discourages bidding, especially when some items are sold before the auction opens. Some merchants have asked how the funds raised will be used. They like to hear that students are urged to repay their awards from the Student Emergency Fund. Dan and Vickie have contact information for addressing thank you notes to the donors. Council members expressed significant appreciation to Dan and Vickie for their successful solicitations and organizing of the auction.

Family Weekend: Registration packets were distributed to the Council members. They were asked to participate in the “meet and greet” session occurring concurrently with the auction. Janicca then briefed Council members on the weekend’s schedule.

Alumni Relations: Keener Fry thanked those present for serving on the Council and noted that all we do is designed to help students first. He distributed Alumni Association membership brochures that outline the Association’s services and benefits. Alumni Relations has a dual role: “to foster a spirit of loyalty and fraternity among graduates and former students and to promote the general welfare, development, achievement, and honor of the university.”

Alumni Relations supports undergraduate in several ways. They sponsor WyoSAA, the student alumni association providing leadership opportunities and help with alumni projects such as Homecoming. Alumni Relations provides 50 scholarships annually and administers the University of Wyoming license plate program that has raised around \$500,000 since its inception. They partner with Admissions to assist with recruiting efforts and host “sendoff” parties for new students coming to UW. They work with Career Services to identify alumni willing to offer career opportunities and advice to current students. They also offer the WyoAlumni alumni portal via the Internet. Graduating seniors receive a one-year membership for free and a second and third year memberships at \$50, which is half the regular price. Fry is working to establish working partnerships with all UW departments to assist them in connecting with their alumni. Research has shown that many younger alumni connect with specific parts of their university—such as a college, student government, athletic teams—rather than the full institution.

Vice President’s Update: Sara noted Janicca’s departure and assured Council members that a good replacement would be found. Janicca has helped to define the role as she has worked with the Council over the past four years. Her day-to-day work has helped the parents’ program gain good traction.

Sara announced that UW has new student leadership for the year and introduced Ty McNamee, ASUW Vice President. Ty explained that he and President Megan Degenfelder are seeking to reach out to students through streaming ASUW Senate meetings online and holding town meetings. They are supporting sustainability by asking recognized student organizations to take an area of campus to keep clean. They are working to gain support from the State Legislature to expand and modernize Half Acre Gymnasium. They want to improve landscaping to the east of the Classroom Building and provide digital sign boards. They want to initiate a campaign to put a statue of a bucking bronc and rider in Prexy’s Pasture. They will also have a tent a Tailgate Park for each home football game.

Sara said national searches will be conducted this year to identify new directors of Student Financial Aid and Admissions.

She, Vice President for Special Projects Carol Frost, and Associate Provost Andy Hansen have been presenting a proposal to modify UW assured admissions criteria and enhance the readiness of Wyoming students for college work. The proposed criteria for assured admission would be a 3.0 or better GPA, a 21 or higher ACT score, and completion of the Hathaway Scholarship Success Criteria. Applicants unable to achieve these criteria could be granted conditional admission and provided with significant support. Currently 150 such students receive support through the Synergy Program; an additional 150 would get similar support. No one would be left out. The new standards would go into effect for the class entering in the fall of 2013. Support for students not able to achieve the assured admission level could be offered sooner. UW wants students to succeed and proper preparation is a key. Currently 73 percent of new freshmen are retained into the following academic year. Around 56% graduate in six years. UW hopes to increase both statistics.

To help transfer students, UW is hosting a conference in Casper to discuss ways in enhance advising for transfer students. Additional articulation agreements are being designed with regional community colleges. Transfer students are also being offered targeted sessions during the transition programs such as Summit 2011. \$250,000 has been set aside for non-resident recruitment. This will be used to increase the number of out-of-state students at a time when Wyoming's high school graduation numbers are decreasing.

On the health and wellness front, UW continues to be a leader in alcohol awareness issues and has joined a 32-school coalition headed by Dartmouth College to identify successful ways to enhance programming to avoid alcohol and drug abuse on campuses. UW has also created a sexual violence and support team of ten people to address issues in this area. The Wyoming Legislature will be asked to provide funding to match student fee increases to pay for the renovation of Half Acre Gymnasium for student use. UW's Outdoor Program has been designated as an area of distinction and will be the focus of additional programming and funding. The Gatekeepers and Lifesavers Coalitions continue their work on suicide prevention.

Patrick "PC" Call is the new Executive Director of Residence Life, Dining Services, and the Wyoming Union. Two major projects in his area are the construction of the new student apartments and the renovation of White Hall.

Chairs-Elect: Council members discussed the job of Council Chair-Elect. It involves participation in email threads and monthly telephone discussions, and attendance at events such as New Student Orientation, Discovery Days, Family Weekend, and Move-In. Council officers get to meet and work with several UW administrators. The "hard work" is done by the staff of the Vice President's office. Nominations were requested. Lida Citreon and Mark Vaporis volunteered. *Maryalice moved and Julie Balzan seconded a motion to close the nominations and elect Lida Citreon and Mark Vaporis as Chairs-Elect for the 2011-2012 year. The motion carried and both accepted.*

Homecoming: Council members agreed to enter a float in the Homecoming parade on October 15. Carlene will complete and submit the application. Council members agreed to dress in Western garb and to honor veterans of the armed services and their families with the float. Maryalice has red/white/blue garland. Irions will provide the trailer and straw bales. Candy will be purchased from Van's Wholesale in Laramie. The float's theme will be Cowboy Parents of the West Salute Military Veterans and Their Families. Joe will attempt to borrow flags for each branch of the service and a POW/MIA flag. Janicca distributed two Homecoming schedules of events and encouraged participation.

Open Discussion:

- Trena complimented UW on the new branding.
- Joe expressed concern that there is a lack of communication between UW and community businesses. He suggested showing the community video to the Council and encouraging stronger participation of the community in UW events.
- Robert and Julie were welcomed as the new Cowboy Parents Council Chairs.
- Janicca was presented with a farewell card and gift cards to Pottery Barn by the Council members. Brad expressed appreciation on behalf of all Council members and noted that the growth of the Council was due in large measure to Janicca's leadership. Janicca expressed her appreciation for the support she has received from the Council members and volunteers. She found it one of the most rewarding parts of her job.
- Council members expressed their appreciation to Brad and Carlene for the leadership of the Council.

Adjournment: With no further business to conduct, the meeting concluded at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Nutter