

## ALUMNI RELATIONS COMMITTEE 2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT

This year the University Senate Alumni Relations Committee focused on three primary goals:

- Further developing *CU there!* to informally connect more students and alumni over the summer months;
- Increasing alumni awareness of available CU Library resources (many free of charge);
- Encouraging global centers to increase proactive efforts with alumni.

### **CU there! Progress and Challenges – Summer 2018**

*Note: There were differences in the execution and publicity for CU there! events between the summers of 2017 and 2018.*

In 2017, social media, the *Spectator* and other outlets were used to publicize the *CU there!* program. Student senators emailed their respective student populations and wrote letters to deans of students and alumni directors, encouraging their constituents to sign up for *CU there!*.

- In 2017, eight events were held in Manhattan
- Issues in 2017 included high attrition rates, demands on staff for registration and management of events.

In 2018, the entire student body was once again invited to participate in *CU there!* via an email from the Student Affairs Committee of the University Senate.

- In 2018, four events (rather than eight) were held in Manhattan
- In 2018, CAA used NationBuilder to help organize *CU there!* to reduce the management time needed from CAA staff members.
- *In NYC:* Students who signed up for the *CU there!* NYC through NationBuilder received event invitations.
  - Students were required to sign up for each event individually.
  - Students that did not show up to two events throughout the summer did not receive subsequent invites. Students were reminded of this policy in all event invitations, reminders and post-event communications.
- *Outside of NYC:* Students were required to sign up through regional clubs' NationBuilder pages rather than through the CAA. Clubs used registration data to determine the best way to engage *CU there!* students, rather than a CAA directive to all clubs to hold *CU there!* events. *Results from a post-summer survey of participating club leaders are currently being collected and analyzed.*

### ***CU there!* NYC Data Summer 2018\***

- Sign-ups for the overall program (All 2018 *CU there!* events reached registration capacity and were sold out)
  - 2017 - 3,063 registrants
  - 2018 - 1,477 registrants
- *CU there!* student event registration
  - 2017 - 1,002 registrants
  - 2018 - 471 registrants
- Percentage of *CU there!* student registrants attending events
  - 2017 - 365 attendees (36%)
  - 2018 - 287 attendees (61%)
- Email open rates of 42% in 2018, number not applicable to *CU there!* 2017
- Event attrition
  - 2017 - average of 64% attrition rate
  - 2018 - average of 42% attrition rate, 15 students removed from the list for two no-shows
- Student attendees came from all 18 schools for *CU there!* NYC
  - 2017 - Greatest participation from Columbia College, Engineering, and SIPA.
  - 2018 - Greatest participation from Columbia College (23%), Engineering (20%), and the Business School (12%).
- Alumni attendees came from 17/18 schools (no Dental Medicine alumni attended)
  - 2018 – Greatest participation from CC, SEAS and Business for alums of all ages; greatest participation from SEAS, SPS, CC, BUS and JRN for 2018 alums.
- Among attendees
  - unique student attendees (79%); 38 attended more than one event
  - 146 unique alumni attendees (68%); 16 attended more than one event
- Top five regional club sign-ups were Northern CA, Boston, Washington DC, Southern CA and Brooklyn
- Top five international club sign-ups were Shanghai, London, Hong Kong, Seoul and France

### **Future of *CU there!*: Considerations for Summer 2019**

- Relative success with registration and attrition issues from last year
- Continued need to identify type of events that would appeal to students from the 18 different schools and backgrounds
- Consider offering *CU there!* programs that address life skills for new graduates, e.g. finding an apartment, building new social networks, navigating personal finances

- Brainstorm whether specialized event types are needed to increase appeal across different schools, degree types
- Some ideas: speed-dating networking event, informal hiking or walking tour event, “how to network” sessions, CAA sponsored catered dinner at Carmine’s
- Networking and informal mentoring found to have large appeal to students
- *CU there!* type events over Thanksgiving holiday vs. keeping a “Summer” brand event
- Other CAA events this year include: Columbia Fiction Foundry, CAA Arts Access, the Columbia Club, the Classic Car Club, the SoHo/Village area, alumni homes
- Possible *CU there!* event on college walk
- Potential for giveaways

*\*Special thanks to Donna MacPhee and CAA team (Paul Lindberg, Elisa Douglas, Genna Farley and Michael DiSarno) for CU there! data.*

### **Alumni and Libraries**

Allison Morrow, Associate Director, Communications (Libraries) met with the Alumni Relations Committee:

Issues for consideration:

- Need to increase alumni awareness regarding their access to the Columbia Libraries.
- Libraries’ expense base has risen and they need to broaden their fundraising reach.
- The Libraries would like to include alumni of all programs across the University and College in their communications.
- Libraries can send a one-time email to newly graduated alumni, informing them of lifetime in-person access and e-resource access, free of charge.
- Strategy to engage alumni: A recent alumni survey found that alumni consider library privileges the most highly valued benefit of being a Columbia graduate.

Ann Thornton stated that the Libraries are committed to continuing extension of benefits to alumni. Most peer institutions don’t extend Libraries licenses to alumni.

Allison Morrow and Kim McCann encourage all Columbia schools to remind alumni that they have access to the Libraries. They are also reconstituting “Friends of Libraries”, with the long-range plan is to broaden awareness of Library services.

## **Alumni and Global Centers**

Professor Safwan Masri, Executive VP for Global Centers and Global Development, met with the committee. Issues for consideration include:

- Global Center directors may increase alumni engagement by being proactive with alumni, e.g. by hosting networking events.
- Committee might work on an app to help alumni drop in on global centers
- Global Centers share alumni news through annual newsletters and their website.
- Centers have been planning ahead strategically to be more relevant and engage with people dealing with world events, e.g., Brexit, polarization, U.S. elections, restrictions on journalists, and democracies under stress in Turkey, Hungary, and India.
- Fifteen percent of faculty engaged with the global centers.
- Centers may help Columbia affiliates take their knowledge and apply it to specific global challenges.
- For faculty who don't have international relationships, the global centers can provide connections with foundations, NGOs, etc.
- The committee hopes that future Global Center events will be advertised widely to alumni.
- Prof. Masri stated that the centers are trying to leverage Columbia's silo structure, by creating customized targeted opportunities in the global centers.

## **2017-2018 Committee Guests:**

- Chris McGarry (Director of Entrepreneurship, University Office of Alumni Development, and Director of Columbia Labs)
- Genna Farley (Assistant Director, Shared Interest Groups, CAA)
- Soulaymane Kachani (Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning) and Sandesh Tuladhar (Director of Online Education)
- Professor Safwan Masri, Executive VP for Global Centers and Global Development
- Paul Hersch, Associate Director, Strategic Planning and Communication, Columbia Global Centers
- Jaclyn Chu, Sr. Director, Global Strategic Engagement for Alumni Relations
- Allison Morrow, Associate Director, Communications (Libraries)

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Liebowitz, Kurt Roeloffs, and Michelle Estilo Kaiser

Co-Chairs, Alumni Relations Committee

September 28, 2018

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