

Alumni Relations

Objectives:

- **Liaison between the current Dance Marathon Council and the Alumni Board**
- **Keep a database of all alumni and create fundraising mail pieces**
- **Create newsletter to inform alumni of important information and dates**
- **Hold events to attract alumni to return to your university/ school during your marathon**

➤ The Dance Marathon Vision

- It is important that you become a resource on everything related to Dance Marathon. You will consult committee members, student organizations, campus administrators and businesses. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the duties and responsibilities of every committee.
- You are a spokesperson for DM. Discuss and represent the views of Dance Marathon throughout the campus and community.
- Make sure that you understand all rules/ guidelines set up by your school, the hospital, and even your community. These will guide you and your members need to understand the importance of following these guidelines.
- The responsibilities of a director are endless and limitless- you must learn to delegate. Many committees will work together to accomplish their responsibilities. Make sure your committee set-up is comprehensive and that one chair is ultimately responsible for each task.

➤ Committee Creation

- Chairs responsibilities can be time consuming. The majority of former Dance Marathon council members say the most important task they accomplished was selecting a strong council. After you relay the Marathon vision, the committee members carry this vision to reality.
- Involve as many people as possible, but make sure to assemble a committee that is dependable and energetic. Search to find individuals that are hard working and able to commit a large amount of time to fundraising for the kids!
- When faced with a great task, many of us find the urge to turn to our close friends. If you feel that urge when it comes to selecting your Dance Marathon council, try to resist it. The committee should be a diverse group that has the drive and determination to make Dance Marathon a hit. Use objectivity in your selection process. Just because someone is a close friend doesn't mean they are a good selection.
- Encourage students of all levels to apply.

➤ Run Committee Meetings

- Once the committee is selected, it is time to bring everyone together. This is a good time to get chairs comfortable with each other. Define expected actions and have them set goals.
- Make the first meeting fun. Conduct some ice breakers and team building games. These activities can immediately make you aware of committee members' personalities and how best to work with them throughout the year. Make the meetings motivational with members leaving feeling empowered to help the kids at Riley.
- Teach the chairs everything about Dance Marathon. Every member must know all marathon information inside and out.
- Be the critical eye and ear for your committee. Often chairs have great ideas, but they also have the tendency to get carried away. It is your responsibility to provide members with a reality check and help them design back-up plans.
- Keep the students on track. Everyone has great stories to tell about the weekend, etc, but you are there for a purpose.
- As you move throughout the year, you will be able to gauge how often meetings should be held. Some committees hold weekly meetings, some don't. This is up to you, however as it gets closer to the marathon (no less than three months away) each committee should hold weekly meetings.
- Set your meeting day, time and place in stone. Attendance should be mandatory and it is helpful to send out a reminder one week in advance.
- Be sure to construct a committee timeline and see that the president receives a copy as well as your committee.

➤ Liaison between the current council and the Alumni Board

- If an Alumni Board currently exists, this committee is in charge of keeping the alumni informed of important information that alumni might need to know. Alumni can be your greatest asset, especially as they become members of society and hold careers. Ask for their help when soliciting sponsors or if your council has a need that you can not fill; alumni may have a connection that can supply your need.
- If an Alumni Board does not exist, begin working with your university alumni organization and contacting previous council members to find out if they would be willing to put a board together. A sample board layout and description is included.
Note: make sure that you stagger the terms or at least the election years so that not everyone on your alumni council changes each election. When Indiana University put their new structure into place, half of the board was elected in for just a one year term.
- Make sure to create a list of the alumni board and give that to your advisor, the Dance Marathon Coordinator at the Riley Children's Foundation and distribute to

all alumni. It should include contact information for the board as well as contact information for other influential individuals.

- Keep a database of all alumni
 - The first thing when you begin to create an Alumni Database is to work with your university's alumni association to see if they can assist you. This organization already sends fundraising mailers to all alumni. If you can create a way of tracking these alumni and designating them as Dance Marathon Alumni, you might be able to work with the alumni association to send out fundraising letters and general information.
 - Then, as your Dance Marathon Program grows and students graduate, keep contact information from each council to create an Alumni Database. As years go by, these individuals will be a large fundraising and support base for your new councils.
 - Include all former executive councils, chair people and 2+ year dancers. This needs to be updated each spring to include graduates.
 - Besides keeping your alumni informed and inviting them to attend your marathon, make sure to solicit a donation from them each year. Create and send them a letter that reminds them that the marathon is coming up and that you need their support. These individuals are now in the working world and might be willing to send you a donation.

- Create a newsletter (email or paper) to keep alumni informed.
 - As said before, Alumni can be your greatest resource. If you keep them informed about events that you are holding, or even just new information and updates, they will feel connected and want to attend your fundraising events.

- Hold events to attract your alumni to return.
 - Alumni had a deep passion for Dance Marathon in the past, so invite them back to enjoy it as alumni! Plan fun activities throughout the weekend such as dinner parties, bar activities and obtain a hotel block. It is not a requirement for you to get these donated or to pay for these items, however just taking care of the planning will encourage alumni to return for another fun filled weekend with Dance Marathon!
 - Another option would be to hold an event half way through your fundraising year to bring your alumni back. In the past, Indiana University held a banquet reception for their alumni each spring. If you decide to do something similar, make sure that you have taken care of the date, the location (Is it donated? What is the price per person?), who will be speaking, decorations, programs, invitations, entertainment and a hotel block if necessary.
 - If you want to get the alumni together without all the fuss, you might try having a bar night. Set the date and the locations and send out invitations to all alumni with the information. Secure hotel accommodations and try to get an average number

of people attending. It would also be helpful to let the bar(s) know that you might bring in a large group. If it is usually a slow time of year, they can have extra staff on hand.

➤ During the marathon

- It may be your responsibility during the marathon to create informational packets for visiting schools, take them on a tour and do a question and answer. Include any information that might be useful to outside individuals that may be looking to start a marathon.
- Oversee all alumni activities. Ensure that they are enjoying the weekend and that they have plenty to do!
- Mingle with your alumni and participate in activities with them. They have been through the marathon before and will have insight into what is going well and what can be improved for next year.
- If your alumni want to meet during the marathon, jump-start the meeting with a thank you for attending. They will appreciate your enthusiasm.
- Don't forget to set up a block of rooms at nearby hotels for your alumni.

*** Remember:

- Always have a back-up plan!
- Delegate! Do not allow yourself to become overwhelmed.
- Act as a DM role model. You represent DM whether you are meeting with a potential sponsor, briefing campus administrators, or sitting in a class. Encourage all committee members to remember they are also role models; everything they do reflects on DM. Have fun but remember to never jeopardize the perception of your organization.

Do it for the kids!

Indiana University Dance Marathon Alumni Board Goals

Officers

President: 2 year term

Vice President: 2 year term

Secretary/Treasurer: 2 year term

term

(alternating)

Internal Board Member: 2 year term
(alternating)

Internal Board Member: 2 year

External Board Member: 2 year

(alternating)

External Board Member: 2 year term

** In the first year, alternating positions should be 1 year terms to ensure not all members exit council at one time.*

President

- Sets goals and vision for Riley Children's Foundation and Hospital
- Maintains DM Alumni Board
- Works with Technology Director on effectively utilizing Alumni section of website

Vice President

- Sets goals and vision for Riley Children's Foundation and Hospital
- Oversees the External Board Members
- Creates and execute mailings of Fall and Spring Fund-raising Letters with IUAA
- Supports President

Secretary/Treasurer

- Sets goals and vision for Riley Children's Foundation and Hospital
- Oversees the Internal Board Members
- Assists Alumni Director with Events and Alumni Database
- Maintains budget
- Liaison between IUAA and the Alumni Board

External Board Members

- Assists Vice President with Fall and Spring Mailings
- Improves Alumni Fund-raising through Alumni based campaigns and events
- Maintains and improves communication between Current Council & Alumni and with Alumni in general

Internal Board Members

- Plans DM Council Retreats
- Works with IUAA and the Alumni Database
- Plans Marathon Weekend for Alumni returning to Bloomington
- Works with Alumni Director to improve Communication between students and alumni
- Sets up and Maintains DM Mentor Program

Indiana University Dance Marathon Alumni Goals

❖ Support current IU Dance Marathon Council through retreats, operating expenses and in-kind and personal gifts

❖ FUNDRAISE

❖ Maintain and build relationships and friendships