

# Mortar Board Chapter Operations

## *Programming for your chapter's alumni* ©



Mortar Board's alumni members are a vital part of the Society. So, how do you contact them? How do you get them involved in what you're doing locally? What makes for successful alumni programming?

### **How do you contact alumni?**

- Depending on the event you're planning, make sure you contact both alumni of your chapter and those from other chapters who may live in your region. Both are valuable networks.
- Ask the National Office for help. We just completed a directory project with many thousands of our alumni, and we have better records than ever before. We're happy to share pertinent information with you if you supply us with specific criteria for your search.
- Talk to your college or university's alumni association. These associations track alumni of many different student organizations. Share what information you find with the National Office to help us make our records even better.
- Once you've compiled good alumni data, create a database for your chapter's use for years to come. Leave detailed instructions for the next alumni chair of your chapter so she/ he knows how to update the data you have left.

### **How do you get alumni involved in what you're doing locally?**

- Check to see if you have a local Mortar Board alumni chapter. You may already have an intact group of volunteers ready and willing to help. There is a full listing of alumni chapters and contact information in the alumni section of our website (<http://www.mortarboard.org/alumni/map.html>). Many of these chapters also give scholarships or otherwise financially support their local chapters. Don't be afraid to ask for help!
- Invite alumni to all chapter events, especially initiation. Many alumni chapters host receptions or brunches at initiation. You may also find alumni willing to help with orientation and officer transition.
- Involve alumni as advisors to your chapter. Even if they are not faculty or staff at the university, they could serve in a supplemental role. We encourage chapters to have more than one advisor, and especially to have on who is a Mortar Board.
- Create a culture of alumni involvement that will perpetuate itself. Once alumni get used to certain annual events with the chapter, their involvement will grow.

### **What makes for successful alumni programming?**

- Ask your advisor, section coordinator and other local alumni about events that may have been held in the past. Ask about attendance, who financed the event and any evaluations that may have been done.
- Hold a focus group with alumni from different generations of Mortar Board. Find out what interests them and what types of events they would attend.
- Seek advice from other chapters. All Project Excellence Award-winning projects are summarized in your conference binder (behind the Officer & Advisor Handbook) and categorized by project type. Read about the alumni projects that have been successful. Talk to the delegate from that chapter to learn more.
- Create a variety of opportunities for alumni to participate. The Virtual Book Drive is a great opportunity for alumni who wish to financially support your chapter but can't commit much time. Homecoming events, lecture series and career nights will be more successful with those alumni who have more time to give.

### **Tips for success**

- Make sure you elect an alumni chair for your chapter. Utilize that person to plan alumni events in advance.
- Create a solid source of alumni contact information data
- Set goals. Be specific about how many alumni you want to get in touch with, and how
- Do your research. Talk to alumni. Use social media and other chapters as resources.
- Share your success! Create a newsletter to share with your current members and alumni about the great new programs you've established.

