**Ripon College Parents' Advisory Committee Meeting (PAC)**

**Meeting Highlights and Minutes**

**Saturday, February 23, 2013**

**Present:**Parents' Advisory Committee: Bob & Carol Burton P'13 (President), Mark and Penelope Greene P'15 (V.P.-Student Life), Donald Klingenberger & Kayt Conrad P'14 (V.P.-Advancement), Richard Krueger '80/P'14 (V.P.-Admission), Nyla Anderson P'16, Alberto & Valerie Bardelas P'15, Kevin Dykstra '83/P'16/P'16, David & Kathryn Gableman P'16, Dan & Shelley Lueck '86/P'15, Michelle McIlree P'13, Greg & Sue Mehlert P'14, Kris & Rick Nogal P'14, David & Joyce Nutting P'14, Rita Peters P'16, CJ & Diedre Skiba P'15, Natalie Sondalle P'11/P'14, Patrice Sonnenberg & Richard Hellstrom P'16

College Administration/Staff: Amy Gerretsen '04 (Associate Director of Alumni & Parent Relations), Nancy Hintz '82/P'10 (Director of the Annual Fund and Alumni & Parent Relations), Zach Messitte (President), Wayne Webster (Vice President for Advancement), Chris Ogle '80 (Vice President & Dean of Students), Margaret Wolfgram '03 (Regional Director of Admission & Admission Volunteer Coordinator)

Guests: Megan Heath '12, Maureen McIlree '13, Jessica Skiba '15

**I. Call to Order (8:48 a.m.)**

# A. Meeting called to order by Mr. Burton.

# B. Self-introductions

**II. Business Meeting**

1. State of the College (Messitte)

President Messitte has been focusing on several key areas over his first eight months at Ripon including:

* + 1. Admission- The admission process is a fierce batter, a never ending political campaign to get the best students. To date, Ripon has a record number of applicants, which is encouraging. A study of Wisconsin demographics will be commissioned to focus on geographic diversity. Ripon needs more applications to become more selective, and reach capacity near 1100 students. President Messitte has been heavily involved in the recruitment process including attending numerous alumni and admission events nationwide.
    2. Fundraising- On February 1st, the Imagine Tomorrow fundraising campaign was launched publicly. At this time $35 million of a $50 million goal has been raised. The focus of the campaign is raising the endowment to fund additional programming, professorships, and scholarships to offset budget funds. Currently the endowment is $67 million.
    3. Storzer Center- An architect has been selected to begin the design process. Similar to Lake Forest College’s new facility, President Messitte envisions Storzer becoming a social center on campus. The goal is to have the doors open in the fall of 2016, but there may be fundraising and construction concerns.

Several other interesting items include:

* + 1. Karl Rove- 450 students in attendance at the event which facilitated good campus debate and is a good exercise for students of the liberal arts. The 2013 Commencement speaker will be Nate Silver, another political and athletic statistician.
    2. 13 For 13- Thirteen $1300 grants from the President’s Office will be available to students, faculty, staff to improve campus life. Several proposals have been chosen already: Adirondack chairs near Todd Wehr, anti-Semitism speaker/dinner, and a world party through Student Life.
    3. Career Discovery Tour Initiative- This spring break a trip designed to give students an opportunity to explore professional pathways with alumni will be held in Chicago. Twelve students were chosen to attend this trip which is subsidized by the Alumni Association Board of Directors. The Career Discovery Tour will now occur each fall and spring break. The fall 2013 trip will be to Washington D.C.

President Messitte fielded questions:

* + 1. Site of the new Storzer Center- It will probably be restructured around the current site of Storzer because the bones of the structure are solid, including the pool and basketball court. Over the coming months a visioning committee will be assembled to take all programs and student, coach and community needs into account. More information will be available by the fall PAC meeting.
    2. Applications- At this time, the goal is to have an incoming class of 300 students. Ripon is not to the point of having a wait list at this time. The search continues for the new Vice President for Admission & Financial Aid.
    3. Recent safety issue- Ripon College takes campus safety and security seriously. The RAVE alert system is set up campus wide, but not enacted because there was no immediate danger to campus. It should be noted, that emergency emails to parents should include the word security or safety in the subject line to increase the chances of being opened and read.
    4. The Pub- Yes, the administration is pondering the idea of legal alcohol sales to give students another campus hangout. There are very few off campus locations that are student friendly.

1. Staff Reports

Student Life (Ogle):

* + 1. Career development initiatives- Students participating in the Career Discovery Tour, several job fairs, increased amounts of alumni-student networking.
    2. Green initiatives- Water filling stations, low flow toilets in Johnson.
    3. National surveys- Overall, very positive results including with Housekeeping and Plant Department. A few concerns noted by students: laundry facilities, Johnson Hall mechanics, furniture updates.
    4. Other- 10 international students on campus this fall with the highest campus GPA thanks in part to the Home Away From Home program. Quality of the student leaders is incredibly strong.
    5. Ongoing struggles- Student Life staff shortage, two long time hall directors will be leaving Ripon this spring
    6. Question- Food quality is a concern of some students. Dean Ogle suggested that Sarjit Singh, Sodexo manager, speak to the PAC directly at an upcoming meeting.

**Advancement & Campaign Report (Webster):**

1. Webster again reminded the group about the progress of the **Imagine Tomorrow campaign** that President Messitte mentioned in his report.
2. Campaign outcomes to date include: physical updates in Lane Library, Pickard Dining Room and Heritage Room, two endowed faculty chairs, 17 new endowed scholarship funds.
3. The goal is to have an $80 million endowment by the end of the campaign (June 2015) which results in about $4 million annually of budget relieving revenue (5% draw).
4. Melissa Anderson '02 was hired in November as the **Executive Director of Marketing and Communications**. There has been an increased focus on the Ripon brand and the new College website launched in December.
5. The 2nd Annual **Tuition Free Forward (TFF) Day** was held on February 7 at Roadhouse Pizza. There was a large turnout of students and Dean Seaman’s band played. TFF celebrates the point in the school year at which time tuition no longer covers the cost of a Ripon education and gifts from alumni and friends pay the rest of the way.
6. **Question**- What is the role of the PAC in the Imagine Tomorrow campaign? Parents are encouraged to make a gift to the Annual Fund to support the campaign. There may be an opportunity for the PAC to support the Alumni Board’s career development fund, for example.

*The Board took a 10 minutes break.*

Fall 2012 meeting minutes were approved as written.

1. Staff Reports (continued)

Annual Fund (Hintz):

1. The Annual Fund covers and supports every aspect of campus life. Ripon has a very aggressive Annual Fund goal, $2.2 million, and in a campaign reaching the goal becomes more difficult because larger gifts are usually deferred to restricted funds.
2. Please consider a gift when a Phonathon caller contacts you. PAC participation is key (60% of active PAC members have made a gift already this year!).
3. Parent philanthropy has increased with outreach to all parents. Thanks to the Burtons for their feature in the newsletter and to the Conrad/Klingenbergers for their thank you letter to high end donors.
4. TFF Day is continuing to educate students on the importance of the giving back and the Annual Fund.
5. Parents of seniors should encourage their students to make a gift to their Senior Class Gift, participation matters.

**Admission (Wolfgram):**

Three areas of need from parent volunteers-

1. **Parent to Parent Calls-** 45 completed calls, 29 voicemails left, 77 postcards sent to prospective parents. Process was fun, and more volunteers are needed. Time required is 1-2 hours each for 10 calls. A packet of information is sent prior to the calling. No other schools are doing this method of outreach.
2. **Events-** Four Winter Warm-Ups were held, personal visit days continue to be popular, Celebration of Excellence brunch/dinner well attended, upcoming accepted student days are in need of more male student hosts.
3. **Referrals-** Keep sending referrals to Margaret via the website.

The **Admission Volunteer Program** is being developed fully in Washington D.C. with alumni visiting high schools and attending college fairs. Volunteers are trained via conference call. Parents can also play a role in the program. A program will be developed in Los Angeles/San Diego beginning in the fall.

**Question:** Parents are welcome to attend fairs in their area. Please share this fair information with Margaret.

# Board Reports (Gerretsen)

* **Parent Social/Faculty Gathering (February 22):** Very well attended again this semester.
* **Upcoming Events** (Parent volunteer sign-ups will occur later this spring via email.)

**Summer Orientation (June 24-27)**

**Move In Day/Family Welcome Receptions (August 22, 24)**

**Parent Social/Faculty Gathering (September 14)**

**Family Weekend (September 14-15):** Ideas for improving of the programming are always welcomed.

**Summer Send Off Events (TBD):** Events will definitely be held in Chicago, Twin Cities and Milwaukee. It is possible that a fourth event would be added in Madison.

1. Committee Reports  
   Advancement (Conrad): Work continues on developing parent solicitations including the PAC challenge letter, first year parent welcome letter and thank you letters. It will be critical to connect campaign language to all parent solicitations. Parent giving should be reinforced during parent to parent calling. Are there items that the PAC could fund outright (i.e. recycling containers, parent travel fund, parent activities)?

Admission (Krueger): The Parent to Parent calls have been very successful. There was little time commitment and it was a great way to connect with parents.

Student Life (Greene): Many volunteer opportunities to help with orientation and move-in day, and there may still be the option of a parent luncheon. Should other opportunities for post-event receptions be offered besides just the Symphonic Wind Ensemble? How can we keep parents engaged (technology, athlete move-in day)? Are there more opportunities to engage student groups in Family Weekend and Homecoming?

PAC President (Burton): Their four years at Ripon have provided great opportunities for them as parents to grow and evolve the PAC by sharing experiences and establishing a parent community. They are excited about the future of the PAC and Ripon.

1. Officer Elections

President- Rick Krueger '80/P'14

Vice President, Admission- CJ & Diedre Skiba P'15

Vice President, Advancement- Mark & Penelope Greene P'15

Vice President, Student Life- Rick & Kris Nogal P'14

# III. Lunch & Learn

**Life after Ripon Panel Discussion**

Tom Vaubel '79, Director of the Career Development Office, and Professors Bob Wallace (biology), and Jody Roy (communication) shared tips on maximizing student outcomes concerning graduate and professional schools, job searching, and career networking. Parent and student questions were plentiful, and the session was a highlight of the meeting.

**IV. Adjournment (1 p.m.)**

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Gerretsen '04

Associate Director of Alumni & Parent Relations

Executive Secretary, Parents’ Advisory Committee