

Ripon College Parents' Advisory Committee Meeting (PAC)

Meeting Highlights and Minutes

Saturday, September 15, 2012

Present:

Parents' Advisory Committee: Bob & Carol Burton P'13 (President), Mark and Penelope Greene P'15 (V.P.-Student Life), Donald Klingenberg & Kayt Conrad P'14 (V.P.-Advancement), Richard Krueger '80/P'13 (V.P.-Admission), Nyla Anderson P'16, Alberto & Valerie Bardelas P'15, Jane Beyer P'16, Steve & Sue Browender P'13, Carmen Cosme P'16, Rick & Jodi Drew P'14, Jonathan & Rebecca Foster P'16, David & Kathryn Gableman P'16, Lisa Gottshall P'16, Dawn Haas P'16, Joe and JoAnn Hall P'16, Don Hausch & Joanne Thomson P'13, Kathy Lamal P'14, Devalina Law P'16, Shel & Mary Leshner P'16, Dan & Shelley Lueck '86/P'15, Michelle McIlree P'13, Greg & Sue Mehlert P'14, Judy Meisner P'16, Sue Niggemeier P'16, Kris & Rick Nogal P'14, David Nutting P'14, Carrie Pennebecker-Barden P'14, Rick & Rita Peters P'16, Richard Reisbick & Cynthia Fleck P'14/P'16, Doug & Beth Sawyer P'16, Diedre Skiba P'15, Natalie Sondalle P'11/P'14, Patrice Sonnenberg P'16, Phil Smith & Marty Breen-Smith 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), Michele Wittler '76 (Associate Dean of Faculty & Registrar), Margaret Wolfgram '03 (Regional Director of Admission, Minnesota)

I. Call to Order (8:30 a.m.)

A. Administration

- Meeting called to order by Mr. Burton.
- Self-introductions

B. Spring 2012 meeting minutes were approved as written.

II. Business Meeting

A. Board Reports (Gerretsen)

- **Summer Orientation (June 25-28):** The PAC again hosted the Parent Mixer (no students) on the evening of the first day, and shared information at the Resource Fair during lunch on the second day. Parents interested in the PAC had the opportunity to sign-up. This year, Ms. Gerretsen participated in an orientation session for parents, as well.
- **Summer Send Off Events (July 22, August 5):** This was the second year for hosting Send Off events for new students and their families. Milwaukee was held in July, and was attended by ~70 guests including President Messitte and his family. The Twin Cities reception was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Greene in August, and had about 50 guests. More discussion will continue about the future of these events between the Office of Admission and Advancement.
- **Family Welcome Receptions (August 16, 18):** Traditionally the PAC has hosted receptions on First Year Move-In Day for students and their families (information, refreshments, current parent hosts), which continued in 2012. However, only having receptions on Saturday misses all of the student athletes who move in on

the Thursday prior. Ms. Gerretsen hosted a reception for families of athletes on Thursday, August 16 as a pilot program. It was decided that receptions will be held with PAC volunteers on both Thursday and Saturday in the future.

- **Parent Social/Faculty Gathering (September 14):** For the past few years the PAC has hosted a social with faculty/staff on the Friday evening of Family Weekend. This fall it was expanded to include all parents as a social activity of Family Weekend. The event was quite successful and will continue in future years.
- Review of Family Weekend schedule

B. Committee Reports

- **Advancement (Conrad):** Fundraising is the main focus of the Advancement committee, as it relates to both the PAC and all parents. Current work continues on a thank you appeal to donors from a parent's perspective. The PAC had 77% participation in the Annual Fund in the '11-'12 fiscal year.
- **Admission (Krueger):** Mr. Krueger introduced Ms. Wolfgram to discuss the Admission Volunteer Program and ways for the PAC to be involved in increasing the number of qualified students interested in attending Ripon. Topics discussed include: college fairs, high school drop offs (Washington DC is the first area of focus), working with alumni on professional letters (outcomes). The PAC can help with: referrals, fostering relationships and interest in Ripon, and parent to parent calls (after acceptance). Ms. Wolfgram collected a list of PAC members interested in helping with those calls.
- **Student Life (Greene):** Key topics in the Student Life committee include move in day receptions for first years and athletes, and the summer send off events. More discussion will take place at the spring PAC meeting concerning these events.
- **PAC President (Burton):** Mr. and Mrs. Burton thanked the College staff for their efforts in supporting the PAC. Also, PAC members were reminded of their connection to each other and the Ripon community as parents.

C. President Zach Messitte

- President Messitte has been at Ripon approximately 10 weeks, and is spending a lot of time learning about the Ripon community from faculty, staff, students, alumni and parents. He is looking at long-term goals (8-10 years) for the College, but is learning Ripon's culture first.
- He reminded parents that a liberal arts degree is a good investment for their students which will result in good careers and an incredible network. He is striving to raise the profile of Ripon and get Ripon in the news for positive/unique aspects of our campus.
- His three areas of focus are: raising the endowment (currently \$60 million) to \$100 million in 4-5 years to benefit students and help alumni continue to pay it forward for future generations; enrollment efforts are being ramped up (increase applicants, draw good students who stay here); infrastructure needs in Farr Hall and Storzer are quickly becoming necessary.
- President Messitte's inauguration will be held on Saturday, September 29 with a full week of activities leading up to the installation. He reminded the PAC that the Inauguration is not just about him, but the College as a whole.

- Questions from the PAC concerning: tasks passed from previous administration (campaign, cycling); raising Ripon's profile (tell stories, everything is connected to Ripon's success); diversity initiatives; getting to know students (book club, lacrosse club, scrabble tournament, teaching, faculty development).

D. Concluding Remarks (Webster)

- Impact of the campaign to date: Commons, Library, weight room, pool renovations in last 6 months; 12 new scholarships and 2 faculty chairs were funded in last year; new faculty development fund and student research funds.
- Ripon's new website will be launched this fall.
- Mr. Webster encouraged parents to participate in the Inauguration telephone town hall on September 26 and attend future events in their area.

III. Adjournment (10 a.m.)

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Gerretsen '04
Associate Director of Alumni & Parent Relations
Executive Secretary, Parents' Advisory Committee