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Alumni Affairs Committee, December 13, 2007

Coastal Carolina University

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**Minutes
Coastal Carolina University
Board of Trustees**

**Alumni Affairs Committee
E. Craig Wall Sr. Building, Wall Board Room
December 13, 2007**

Committee Members Present: Mr. Samuel H. Frink, Mr. Clark B. Parker (joined the meeting at 8:45 a.m.), and Dr. Samuel J. Swad

Other Board Members Present: Mr. William H. Alford

Others Present: Ms. Jean Ann Brakefield, Dr. Debbie Conner, Dr. David A. DeCenzo, Mr. Patrick J. Herrmann, Mr. J. Scott Joyner, Ms. Wendi V. Lee, Dr. Danny Nicholson, Dr. David B. Turner, Ms. Nila Hutchinson, and Ms. Chyrel Stalvey

Dr. Swad called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Frink made a motion to approve the Alumni Affairs Committee meeting minutes of October 11 and November 30, 2007. The motion was seconded by Dr. Swad and passed.

Two directors of the 2008 Executive Board Members of the Alumni Association were introduced: David Turner (Second Vice President) and Patrick Herrmann (First Vice President). Other officers not in attendance were Rob Shelton – Chairman; Dan Sine – President; and Paul Sweeney - Secretary/Treasurer.

Dr. Nicholson said that although a lot of progress has been made, there is a lot of work to be done for alumni data management. There is only a skeleton crew with 71,000 constituencies to manage. Linda Murdock has been hired as Donor Database Specialist. With additional staff, data entry data management should be easier.

The phone-a-thon room capacity has been doubled and twice as many alumni can be reached. We need good phone numbers and addresses.

Dr. Swad asked if students helped to enter the data. Mr. Joyner said that the data must be entered correctly and you have to be careful in choosing who enters information. Wall students helped over the summer. Additional staff can enter—Wendi Lee and Jean Ann Brakefield. Four or five alumni update and enter their own data on the Web site each day.

Dr. DeCenzo asked what the return rate was on the last mailing. Ms. Brakefield responded that it was 19%, which does not include unknown addresses. Dr. Nicholson said Blackbaud had been very helpful and that is why the return was only 19%. Dr. DeCenzo suggested hiring a company to find current addresses.

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Mr. Alford asked the administration to prepare a comprehensive plan to include personnel, outsourcing, and budget to improve the database by the February Board meeting to get us where we need to be.

Other amenities available and advertised to alumni include credit cards and homeowners and health insurance which have been well received.

In January NetCommunity will come on-line and this will give reason for alumni to network with other alumni. NetCommunity has a component that interfaces with FaceBook which will also pull alumni together. NetCommunity will also help with e-mail addresses. Ms. Lee maintains a My Space page for Coastal alumni and about 700 alumni are online. Events are posted there and a good response is received.

Dr. DeCenzo reported that targeted areas for development efforts will begin in January in Miami, February in Atlanta, and March in Charlotte. A trip was made to Austin in November. These visits will help build alumni chapters. After these visits, their names and information are given to Ms. Brakefield and she follows up in contacting and putting them on mailing lists.

Mses. Brakefield and Lee and Mr. Joyner met with Mr. Jim Branham regarding the bi-annual event at his home which brings approximately 40 alumni from the 50s, 60s, and 70s eras together. Mr. Branham was not in agreement to combine his party with a celebration on campus honoring Mr. Biddle's receipt of an honorary doctorate. However, he was very much in favor of an event to be held on campus for Mr. Biddle. In order not to lose Mr. Branham's core group, event will be held on Saturday, June 7 at his home. Participants help pay for a portion of the event but not all expenses are covered. There is also a liability issue with the event.

The committee talked of holding the Larry Biddle event in April in conjunction with CINO Day, Honors Convocation, or other events while the students are on campus. Burroughs and Chapin has agreed to help sponsor this event. Dr. Swad asked to have a date for this event by the February Board meetings.

At the last committee meeting, Coastal set an alumni giving goal of 30%. There were questions regarding whether or not this was a workable figure. A handout was prepared and distributed. Mr. Joyner stated the main source of information was the 2005 statistics from the U.S. News and World Report which drives the number across the nation. Nineteen universities within our conference and other selected schools were used in comparison. Some alumni giving included CCU - 9%; GA Southern - 9%; James Madison - 9%; UNC-Wilmington - 11%; Winthrop - 17%; College of Charleston - 28%; Clemson - 27%; USC - 23%; and Furman 44%. It gets right back to data management, finding alumni, and communication.

Dr. DeCenzo noted that the College of Charleston and Winthrop are ahead of us in freshmen retention rates and graduation rates are higher than Coastal. When you graduate happy people, it translates into happy donors.

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We lose 30% of our freshmen their senior year. Over and over Dr. DeCenzo hears that the issue is that there is nothing to do on campus. A student center is important. Education-wise we are competitive with other institutions.

Dr. Nicholson believes that Coastal could reach a 15% alumni giving goal if there was enough focus on improving the database. Mr. Joyner believes the more alumni chapters and NetCommunity coming on-line will improve alumni giving.

We have to market ourselves better, reassure the community that we are good stewards of our money, and cultivate major donors.

The Senior Celebration will be held this afternoon from 4-6 p.m. at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center. Forty-seven seniors will join the 1954 Society.

Mr. Joyner believes that it has been a good move for Alumni Relations to come under the Advancement umbrella as they work together cultivating major donors.

As there was no further business, Dr. Swad moved to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chyrel Stalvey for
Tommy M. Stringer
Secretary/Treasurer