

**Stony Brook University
School of Dental Medicine**

School of Dental Medicine Alumni Board of Directors

Deans Conference Room
Sunday, April 3, 2005
11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Attending: Anthony Casino, President; Peter Ceravolo, Anthony Fazio, Steven Goldstein, Jodi Guttenberg, Daniel Melnick, Maria Ryan (teleconference), Steven Schwartz, Laura Selub (teleconference), and Rhona Sherwin.

Excused: Denise Emma, Paul Handsman, and Ernest Orphanos.

Staff: Barry Rifkin, Dean, School of Dental Medicine; and Bill Dethlefs, Assistant Director for Alumni Relations-HSC.

Minutes

I. Welcome/Introductions - Bill Dethlefs, Assistant Director Alumni Relations, Health Sciences Center

A brief history was given of the relationship between the School of Dental Medicine and the Stony Brook University Alumni Association. Today's meeting is the inaugural meeting of the School of Dental Medicine Chapter Board of Directors, of the Stony Brook University Alumni Association. The campus-wide governing board is the Stony Brook University Alumni Association Board of Directors, of which Maria Ryan is a member. Instead, the School of Dental Medicine Alumni Board has the important role of acting in an advisory capacity on behalf of the school's alumni. It represents the official voice of the alumni in concert with the Dean. It should also not be confused with prior efforts to have an independent Dental Medicine Alumni Association.

Besides an overview of the organizational structure, the support materials distributed during the meeting were also reviewed. The current dues structure involving annual and lifetime memberships were also addressed. Annual memberships have been \$30, but will soon increase to \$45, of which \$30 will remain with the chapter. The lifetime memberships are \$400 and are not expected to change. Bill Dethlefs or Kathy Yunger should be notified if there are any changes needed to the board roster such as mailing or e-mail addresses. (See attached-pending).

II. Greetings and Challenge to the Board - Barry R. Rifkin, Dean, School of Dental Medicine

Highlights of the history of the School of Dental Medicine were given by Dean Rifkin. The School of Dental Medicine was created as a small school in the early 1970's. Originally there were 24 students in a class, now there are 38. From the beginning, the School of Dental Medicine was created as one of the best in the country. It has also been in place long enough for most of its founding staff to have retired.

Besides the school, the profession itself has experienced dramatic change. Independent of these changes, there is new financial strength and learning power in private practice that has increased over the years. Unfortunately, fewer dental professionals are choosing academics, research, and teaching. Of those that do choose academia, many move to other schools as new opportunities become available.

There are also situations that become tragedies. Recently, Richard Oringer DDS, a beloved member of the faculty and a graduate of the Class of 1992, was killed at the intersection of South Campus Drive and Nicolls Road. His widow, the Dental Medicine Assistant Dean for Admissions, Erin Riley, has since left with her young son to be closer to family. These positions can be filled, but it does have a negative impact on the culture of the school.

As for financing, all public universities have had their state allocation reduced over time. In private colleges, 70% of their budget is covered by tuition. With the school of Dental Medicine, the state share of the budget is now 25% and declining further each year. Tuition has gone up by \$4,000 annually and this increase has not been added to the school's budget.

Despite these challenges, the quality of incoming students remains high. Their GPA is in the range of 3.6 – 3.7. The applicant pool for the incoming class is excellent. We are proud to say that the clinic management system is foremost in the country.

As a challenge to the board:

- The School of Dental Medicine and Dean Barry Rifkin need the members of the board to actively reach out to other alumni.
- Ideas for events and activities are needed.
- As is help as mentors to students.
- In addition, financial support is needed as is assistance in helping to find friends that can be donors or supporters of the school in other ways.
- Board members were asked to share the “story” of the school, particularly with examples of success and in regard to its high profile role in the community.
- Overall, active participation on this board was highly encouraged.

Dean Rifkin closed by saying, “as you begin your cohesive development as a group you will have my fullest support.”

III. Message from Board President -Anthony Casino

Anthony Casino greeted the board and stated “as this is the first meeting of the new alumni board it is fortunate that there is a commitment from each of you to help build this board into

something vital.” He then expressed his appreciation that some of the current board members were involved with the prior efforts to organize as an independent alumni association. That history is expected to be important as the board moves forward. This board’s affiliation is now with the Stony Brook University Alumni Association, as the chapter leadership.

Over the nearly 30 year history of the School of Dental Medicine there have been significant barriers to alumni involvement with the school. Help from the board was requested to try to break those barriers down. Some of these barriers or obstacles include:

- The belief that state support will financially stabilize the school.
- Experiences while as students were not always positive and influence current levels of support.

He further indicated that from here forward it will be necessary to identify problems and discuss solutions. This must include building a relationship with students much earlier than in the past. It will also be important to work toward creating a ‘culture of philanthropy.’ At this point only 5% of Stony Brook University alumni give to the university on an annual basis as referenced in U.S. News and World Report. However, it was good to note that 37.4% of Dental Medicine graduates have been donors at least once, but more support is still needed. He closed by suggesting that to set us on the right path it will be important to reach out to our alumni, possibly by class year, and to encourage healthy competition between alumni groups.

IV. Expectations of Board Member Participation – All

To help move the board and the alumni of the school into this new relationship there are several action items that need to be addressed.

These include:

- Raising awareness of issues with alumni
- Focusing when possible on national outreach to alumni
- Increasing the level and importance of communication, besides that given through *Stony Brook Dentistry Today* and the annual fund.
- Inviting back alumni to present during class and other speaking engagements
- Using technology when available, such as web-casting, should be encouraged to transmit seminars and key speeches to a wider audience.
- Developing online study programs with built-in testing modules should also be explored.
- Planning fun events such as ski weekends or Broadway performances should be considered in conjunction with continuing education programming.
- Creating events with specific outcomes in mind including a welcome dinner for new students, a congratulatory event for graduating students, a lecture series, and related cost-contained events for continuing education credits. All upcoming events will need to be promoted at the earliest date possible.
- Building tradition and consistency of annual events are also very important. (As one example, UCLA holds an annual continuing education program in Hawaii. Attendance has increased significantly over time). Persistence pays off.
- Creating a student mentor program. It is effective, but labor intensive.

- Generating ideas that will bring alumni and students together must still be done such as career guidance.
- Overall, using the web to promote events, activities, and membership related information should be done on a regular basis.

Many alumni have felt out of the loop. It will be important to get them reconnected by starting with a phone call or a personal letter. The human touch is irreplaceable.

It was also suggested that the names of the Dental Medicine residents be added to the mix. Currently, there are over 765 alumni with degrees, plus adding those with certificates brings the total over 800. When the residents are added the total exceeds 1,000. A novel suggestion was made to encourage children of alumni to join as friends of the alumni association.

Maria Ryan suggested that when possible board members encourage their peers to fund student scholarships. She and Charles Ryan have together funded a \$10,000 endowed scholarship. This particular arrangement includes a match from the Stony Brook University Alumni Association. The endowed scholarship makes \$500 available to a student, which is then matched by an additional \$500 from the alumni association, for a \$1,000 award to a deserving student.

V. Subcommittee Development and Discussion – All

After much discussion three subcommittees were proposed and approved. These committees are Professional Development, Special Events, and Membership. The committee members were asked to develop a definition for presentation during the next meeting. Anthony Casino sent an interest list around to volunteer for subcommittee participation. Those that could not attend will be contacted before the next meeting.

It was discussed that the most important initial mission of the board is communication. Follow-up is always needed. It will also be important to expand the alumni presence and student recruitment state-wide, region-wide, and nationally. For those that have had negative experiences as students, this energy can be rechanneled into positive energy. It was agreed that there are also many distinct advantages to being trained in a small class and in a smaller school.

Preliminary membership in the subcommittees is as follows:

- Professional Development: Peter Ceravolo, Denise Emma & Jodi Guttenberg.
- Special Events: Anthony Casino & Steve Goldstein
- Membership: Anthony Fazio, Daniel Melnick, Steven Schwartz & Rhona Sherwin.

VI. Review Draft Bylaws – All

The draft bylaws that were distributed during the meeting have some similarities to the other alumni chapters in the HSC. Bill Dethlefs drew attention to two of the items. One is the statement that asks for personal commitment to the School of Dental Medicine by supporting the fundraising activities of the school (Article II, #3 on page 1). The other is the importance of the board reflecting the diversity of the alumni profile of the school (Article VI, Sec. 1.b.). Board members were encouraged to read through the draft and be prepared to discuss additions, deletions, and any other changes during the next board meeting.

VII. Discussion of Future Meetings

Until the bylaws are approved there was discussion of holding board meetings on a quarterly basis and having the subcommittees meet or communicate through other means independent of the regular board meetings. Since the charter meeting was held during the second quarter of 2005, a meeting was proposed to be held during the third quarter. The meeting date and time that was approved will be Sunday, September 11, 2005, from 11 am – 1 pm in the Dean’s Conference room, School of Dental Medicine. Teleconferencing will again be offered.

VIII. Adjourn - Anthony Casino

The meeting was adjourned at 1 pm.

IX. Preliminary Agenda for the Next Meeting on Sept. 11, 2005

- A. Introductions
- B. Review the Minutes
- C. Review and modify the Bylaws
- D. Subcommittee reports
 1. Membership
 2. Professional Development
 3. Special Events
- E. Calendar of Upcoming Events
- F. Online Community and Web Access
- G. Next Meeting
- H. Adjourn