



Parents Council Leadership Team Meeting Notes

February 21, 2009

2:00-3:00 pm

Nicholson Library Conference Room

Attending: Dick and Dawn Bangert, Greg Cody, Ann Kough (Chair), Jeff Schur

Staff: Susan Barnes Whyte, College Librarian, Bruce Wyatt, Vice President for College Relations, Debbie Harmon, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations, and Jodi Kilcup, Assistant VP for College Relations (via phone)

Excused: Laura Edman, Karen Maguire

Welcome and Introductions

After welcoming everyone, Ann Kough encouraged those who hadn't yet signed their confidentiality forms to sign and send them to College Relations.

Student life at the Nicholson Library

Susan Barnes Whyte, College Librarian, provided a vivid account of the library as a busy hub of student activity, which reflects the changing nature of college libraries. It tends to be most busy at night, with students gathering to study in groups. Susan's technology budget has grown dramatically over the years, as online journals and resources replace print media. Now, 35-50% of her budget goes toward hard and software. [ORBIT \$12MM, I didn't get this.] The library is also a hub of community activity, with an annual calendar of readings, exhibits, lectures, and events. She employs five librarians and a large number of work study students. This semester she plans to place a coffee cart in the "avenue" the open area near the check-out desk.

Ear to the ground

Parents reported on the experiences of their students. Ann's daughter Emily traveled to Turkey, Dick and Dawn's Bonnie has been an intern at an elementary school, Blair is working as a soccer referee. Greg heard that a friend's child is transferring to Linfield. The team reports that the Yamhill County region is a draw for parents and urges Linfield to capitalize on its assets and resources. [Debbie, I'm not sure what this message means: Other places = fundraising, perceptions of future.]

Parent event planning

Team members like the idea of focusing on Family Weekend as a signature event for the Parents Council, and to build on the momentum of Orientation for new parents. They suggested including a performance or concert among the activities, and planning a balance of activities and free time with students. Several expressed interest in opportunities to explore Yamhill County (perhaps facilitated by a “passport” to local businesses). Other ideas include: holding a wine tasting on game night, sending new parents a list of businesses that support Linfield (from the Parents Council), to help “court” new parents, and holding a reception in Seattle for parents of current students in November.

Parent communications

Most of the team recalled receiving the new integrated E-cat, which provides news content to all constituent groups in one e-newsletter. They were positive about the new approach. [In response to a question that arose in the meeting, the parents and family section of the Linfield website received 815 hits in the past month.]

Parents Fund

Parent participation in giving is at 20%, which is a strong number, especially considering the fact that College Relations began developing parent communications and programming in 2006. The average gift from parents so far this year is \$122.

The team discussed the value of setting a goal for the Parent Fund and using a “thermometer” approach to encourage giving, reminding donors of tax benefits, helping parents understand how their gifts are used. Bruce explained our current efforts to inspire annual gifts by informing donors about cuts to the state-funded Oregon Opportunity Grant. The group recommended that the next direct mail letter to parents should come from the Parents Council Leadership Team. In addition, the team agreed to continue sending fiscal year-end thank you notes in the spring and making calls to incoming parents in the fall.

Closing

Next meeting: Mom’s Weekend, Saturday, May 2, time and location TBD, for a “thank you note” party.

Annual Volunteer Leadership Retreat, Saturday, June 13, Portland campus