



Board of Trustees

Advancement, Marketing, and External Relations Committee
9:30 AM

April 25, 2024
Minutes

Loughman Living Room, Scanlon Hall

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Dr. Gloria Williams, Vice Chair Chris Montemayor, Secretary Daniel Currier, Trustee Melissa Alvarado, and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Trustee Madeline Landrau

TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT: Paul Boudreau, George Gilmer, Theresa Jasmin, Dr. Robert Martin, William Reichelt

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson; Institutional Advancement Vice President Ms. Lisa McMahon; Director of Advancement and Major Gifts Mr. William Hynes; Executive Director of Communication, Marketing and Branding Dr. Leslie Rice, Director of Conference and Event Services Ms. Joanne Bigelow, and Assistant Director of Conference and Event Services Mr. Ryan Begin.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM by Committee Chair Dr. Gloria Williams and it was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and captured as recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Montemayor, seconded by Trustee Alvarado, to accept the minutes from the February 8, 2024 meeting. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Advancement

Ms. Lisa McMahon thanked the board for the strategic investment from Dr. Thompson's innovation fund to create a Conference and Event Services (CES) Office on campus. She introduced the staff of CES, Joanne Bigelow and Ryan Begin. Ms. Bigelow again thanked Dr. Thompson and the Board for their vision and trust by providing the funding necessary to create the CES office to address the strategic initiative of generating non-tuition revenue to offset student fees and support the University community. She added that she has drafted a policies and procedures manual that is currently being reviewed by Cabinet.

Mr. Begin presented the PowerPoint slides. Highlights include the vision and mission of the Conference & Event Services office, the work done with consulting firm Envision Strategies who assisted in hiring one additional staff for CES office, and an explanation of the need and benefit of replacing the current EMS

system with a new event/conference system scheduling software. He also shared that there are six groups contracted to be on campus this summer and he provided the estimates of projected revenue.

Discussion was had regarding campus capacity for groups; slowly expanding summer events; the limited number of weeks available during the summer; where extra charges could be added; food cost; and day programs versus overnight programs. A follow-up will be provided.

Fundraising/Engagement/Alumni

Ms. McMahon shared that there have been a number of engagement events as part of our 185th anniversary celebrations. In February, as part of Black History Month, there was a *Keeper of the Dream* dinner to honor those who continue to carry on Dr. King's legacy. The City of Westfield, the City of West Springfield, as well as Westfield State, each selected two members of their communities who exemplify Dr. King's commitment to justice, equality and social change. In March in celebration of Women's History Month there were two events. We hosted General Clara Adams-Ender for a book presentation and signing of her memoir, *My Rise to the Stars: How a Sharecropper's Daughter Became an Army General* and followed that event with the inaugural Dora Robinson Speaker Series *Supporting our Superwomen* featuring a panel discussion. All three events were successful. On May 16, part of Commencement festivities, we will have a reception to honor our Commencement Speaker, Mary Lou McDonald, President of the Sinn Féin Party in Ireland. In addition to these signature events, Alumni Relations celebrated the Alumni Criminal Justice Hall of Fame inductees, two of whom, young men, were honored posthumously, with a breakfast. This event is one of the most honoring and highlight what Westfield State is all about. Also in April was the annual Interfaith Breakfast which is always a full house and was once again a success.

Ms. McMahon shared that at the Foundation board meeting yesterday, the board spoke about ways members can support the University and Foundation, especially during this year of celebratory signature events. One method is the circle of influence model, to think about people you know who you can invite to an event, ask to be a sponsor, buy a ticket or simply speak to about the University and let them know all the good work being done here. Any money raised is about creating access and removing barriers to student opportunities.

Ms. McMahon announced that the Westfield State University Foundation board voted to pass their letter of support to the University for FY25 in the amount of \$1.4 Million.

Mr. William Hynes shared Institutional Advancement staff traveled to Florida with the President in March to connect with alums. He related the various engagement events including attending a Red Sox spring training baseball game, the Naples St. Patrick's Day Parade and reception following, and the Hogan Classic annual golf outing. Each year more and more Florida alums come out to engage with the University. Connections continued at home through the Alumni Criminal Justice Hall of Fame breakfast and out of state through a visit to DC to meet with the DC alumni chapter and current WSU interns working in DC through The Washington Center.

Moving on to the Give A Hoot campaign, he shared they had 100% participation from the volunteer boards and he thanked the board. They reached 397 donors who participated in raising a total \$102,000.

Mr. Hynes related that in March 2023, Professor Pat Romano, a long-time chemical and physical science professor at the University, passed away. His family, friends, faculty and staff are coming together on May 11 to honor him and launch the Dr. Patrick Romano Scholarship and kickoff a fundraising campaign for this scholarship in his memory and to name a lab the *Professor Patrick Romano Memorial Laboratory*. Thus far

they have raised \$14,000. Mr. Hynes stated that this is an example of how when we partner with faculty staff and family, we open new doors to donors and these connections grow our endowment.

Integrated Marketing and Communication Update

Dr. Leslie Rice discussed the strategic investments around advertising initiatives. Tracking our success, what's working?

- Westy Wednesdays, wearing your WSU gear on Wednesdays. This is working, it shows our pride and is driving engagement.
- "Merch Drop" is a surprise event where people get free WSU gear but it is only announced on social media a few minutes before it happens. Students love it.
- Trends over social media is currently being tracked. We are tracking to find the best methods, which are people engaging with through likes and comments.
- The campaign with PVTA leads us to say should we increase our investment with them or place dollars somewhere else. Anecdotal commentary has been less than expected with this campaign.
- Dr. Rice updated the Board on the detailed faculty/staff profiles, which the community seems to enjoy.
- She also handed out an envelope that they mailed to school counselors, and accepted students to promote enrollment. She partnered with admissions on this, it was costly and they will evaluate if the cost is worth the return.
- They created selfie stations around campus designed to have the students take photos and post on their social media, thereby doing some advertising for us.

MOTION made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Montemayor, to adjourn the meeting. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously**

Meeting adjourned at 10:33 AM.

Attachments:

- a. Draft Minutes of February 8, 2024
- b. Conference & Event Services Overview
- c. 185th Anniversary Sponsorship Packet
- d. Going Global Poster
- e. Alumni Update Slide
- f. CJHOF Program
- g. Integrated Marketing & Communication Update

Secretary's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Advancement, Marketing, and External Affairs Committee meeting held on April 25, 2024.

Daniel Currier, Secretary

Date