

Alumni Council Meeting August 24, 2013

I. Opening Prayer

Barry Davis

II. Welcome and Introduction

New Members: Mark Cowley and Bob Rak

III. Update on Geneva Across America

Mike Loomis updated that the trip went well minus the few injuries and flat tires. They got to talk to many people about Geneva and many checks were sent in to help fund scholarships. The goal was \$25,000 and they are over \$55,000 currently. They went from San Francisco to Bethany Beach. Eight people completed the cross-country trip.

IV. Presidents Update

Ken Carson is here in place of President Smith who is out of town with family.

He first gave an update on higher education. He has been updating campus weekly about high education. He explained that a "MOOK" is a Massive Open Online Course. These courses are being offered for free at some Universities. You can take the "MOOK" for free without receiving credits or you can pay a small amount at some schools to receive a degree. A YouTube video called "20/20" talks about the demise of higher education. He updated us that on average 2 out of 3 college students graduate college with debt. The average debt is \$26,000.

He then explained how these programs would affect Geneva. He went on to describe how Geneva needs to find other sources of funding. These programs have affected many other small colleges and universities around the northeastern area. There is the idea of moving to true 3-year programs. Geneva will still offer 4-year programs but students will have

the option of completing their degree in 3 years. Ted Kay asked how the credits would be affected between a 3 and 4-year degree. Geneva currently requires 126 credits to graduate. It may drop to 120 credits in the future with the possibility of a 3-year degree. It would be 120 credits for a 3 or a 4-year degree. Some schools are thinking of dropping their credits to 90. The number currently in the country is between 120-132. The three years would just require students to take more credits in a semester depending on how many credits they bring in with them. However, majors such as Education and Engineering could not be completed in 3 years. They are still in the early stages of figuring this out so nothing is set in stone.

Geneva needs to make improvements on how much they spend on capital improvement. Geneva does not spend enough due to other cost factors. Its not that they do not see things such as the broken sidewalks they just need to use money elsewhere. He reminded the Alumni Council that anything we can do as Alumni to help people to give back is greatly appreciated.

Katie asked about Geneva's current acceptance of transfer students. Ken Carson explained how Geneva is making it easier to transfer.

Carolyn asked about Geneva's graduation rate. Ken Carson said it is around 60% within 6 years. Geneva's retention rate is around 80%. Geneva is working to keep their programs affordable to their students.

Ted Kay asked Ken Carson about the seriousness of improving capital improvements. Ken agreed on the importance of this area to appeal to future students.

Ted Kay also brought up the idea of having all scholarships posted on a website for students to find ones that appeal to their major. Ken Carson said that they would look into that. Then there was conversation around the table about how much we should help students along in high school to get into college and how much students should do by themselves when looking into college and scholarships. The table also discussed the possibility of dual enrollment with local Christian High Schools.

V. Board of Trustees Update

Bruce Backensto gave an update that President Smith will be moving into a house closer to campus very soon.

He also discussed how much the Music building would actually end up costing. It was originally thought to be around 2.6 million and now it is looking more around 4 million. Best-case scenario they will know more

about it by the May Alumni meeting. So far 1.6 million was raised for the fine arts building.

Since we are no longer simply tuition driven, the board's current priority is how to raise money without simply tuition. The board is wrestling with sticker price vs. reality.

Ted Kay asked what's driving the increase in tuition. Bruce said electric, health insurance and building repairs (Aka economics and maintenance). Professors salaries have been on freeze for 2 years now.

Bruce reminded us that we need to pray for Geneva's future.

VI. Institutional Advancement Update

Jeff Jones gave an update on the giving percentage. We are currently up to 14%. The larger classes are not giving as much back, mostly due to higher debts. Whereas, smaller classes are giving back more. About 100-125 donors have been added in the past year. Still a lot more work to do.

Overall last year was a really good year in giving. They had a 1.4 budgeted number and they hit 2. This year they are a little behind so far but they believe they will get to their goal.

He discussed how the Advancement Board is working on improving the facilities we have on campus such as the apartments.

There are approximately 350 incoming students this school year. Jeff talked about giving out the financial aid more efficiently. Barry talked about how students want to go to the school that gives them the most money. Jeff described how students are more business driven then emotionally driven as they were in the past when choosing schools.

Carolyn asked what the retention rate was of the football players. She was describing how initially it does not appear many would make it but many end up blossoming. Dan is looking into it. Barry described how he was "that guy" and how he made it. Bob also described how he was going to transfer but then chose not to and is glad he didn't.

Ted Kay also asked about Estates and how and when that works. Jeff described a variety of ways they acquire Estates.

Adam brought up how many more Geneva Billboards are posted locally. Jeff explained how their new advertisement firm is more strategic than in the past.

Katie reminded the council how even with the local economy Geneva has not faltered. They still stand firm on what they believe regardless of what is going on around the world.

Carolyn offered the idea of posting a sign or giving out flyers at Homecoming about all of the benefits you have of being a Geneva Alumni (such as \$25 membership a year to the fitness center, library access, career development office, etc.).

VII. GCSU update

Katie Bushaw gave an update on the GCSU. This year will be the $100^{\rm th}$ year of GCSU.

Katie discussed a structure change to GCSU. The Student Union went from 32 members a few years ago to 8 members now. The members include: Executive President, Communications Executive, Financial Executive, Clubs Executive Coordinator, and another Clubs Coordinator and then a class president for each class.

The GCSU is looking into getting rid of the smoker's gazebo because of the influence it has on incoming students. The history of the smoker's gazebo was to get students to smoke in the gazebo rather than in neighbor's yards. They are planning on working with physical plant to improve the area behind the gazebo, boardwalk themed, possibly calling it the "Overlook." Currently the gazebo houses approximately 50 people. There were a lot of ideas around the table about getting rid of the smokers gazebo or keeping it. Kelly gave the idea of surveying the current students and asking them whether or not they would want a smoking area on campus. Also, there were ideas around the table to make the area "Alumni Overlook" and making a smoking "area" rather than a smoking gazebo. Ideas involved possibly donating money and how people would react to a "smoking area."

The GCSU is also looking into updating the "tunnel" on campus. They want to power wash it, add lighting and make it a senior class gift by painting it yellow and having seniors sign the walls, and also a picture of the tornado painted on it. They are thinking of possibly calling it "Tornado Alley."

Katie R. brought up the possibility of having a "Geneva Our Town" for taking part in service events on campus rather than just an "Our Town" in the entire community. The GCSU is also looking to put an outdoor basketball court on campus. They know this is rather expensive to put in but they would still like to do it based on student interest. They are looking to put it in the lot where the football players park by Metheny Fieldhouse. They are looking into even just putting a half court to start.

A few other items they are working on are helping with the local community bike trail and the image of the Student Union.

VIII. Alumni Relations Update

Dan gave an update about a Junior Baseball player from Geneva that signed with the KC Royals minors this past summer.

Dan brought up Homecoming. He described about how this year there is no "theme" such as "I spy" but rather the "theme" is simply "GENEVA!" The committee brought up the possibility of bringing back the parade. Dan is very adamant about brining student affinity. He wants to make sure traditions continue. Kelly brought up the possibility of clubs having to create floats for a parade to ensure funding through the GCSU. This would hopefully bring people together and bring back a strong sense of pride and tradition at Geneva. Carolyn wants to make sure the tradition of ringing the bell and also the alma mater.

The Alumni Office is currently reaching out towards young alumni. They want to let them know that even though they might not be able to give financially they can still seek the Alumni Office for help on finding a job and how to pay back student debt. The Alumni Office offers an online discussion board where Alumni can discuss these topics.

IX. Committee Update

Dan is working to elevate the stature of Alumni Council. Specifically in regards to committees.

X. Homecoming

- a. DSA
- b. Gift
- c. Schedule/Duties