



CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

MARCH 2012



Alumni Association Chapter Handbook

St. Francis Xavier University has been educating the minds and hearts of students from across Canada, the U.S. and the world since 1853. The StFX residential experience creates incredible spirit, pride and lifelong friendships, which have led to Alumni who are the most loyal in North America according to independent polling. The StFX spirit and values has had a tremendous impact on our graduates and consequently on the communities in which they live. StFX today is stronger than ever thanks to the support and belief of our alumni: the campus is the most beautiful in Canada, the academics continue to receive top marks from the Globe & Mail, while Maclean's ranked StFX as having the #1 reputation in Canada. With all change and accomplishments, the StFX spirit and pride is as strong as ever.

Alumni are the lifeblood of StFX and support has come in the form of helping recruit new students or through generous donations, which help with student scholarships or campus renewal. The StFX Alumni Chapter Handbook will help ensure Chapters across the globe share best practices in order to keep chapters strong and engage even more alumni.

Purpose and Objective of a Chapter

- Provide opportunity for Alumni to re-connect with old and new friends from StFX
- Hold events that are fun and informative
- Update chapters on news from StFX University by inviting guest speakers from the University, i.e. The President, Athletic Director, Coaches, VP Advancement, etc.
- A way for alumni to maintain contact with StFX wherever they live
- Create opportunities for alumni from all generations to connect in their community
- Encourage Alumni participation in the life of StFX where they can promote and support it
- Establish chapters where none exist, and strengthen chapters to increase involvement

StFX Alumni have a considerable impact on the University, and enhancing local Chapters will further improve StFX and benefit students for the future.

StFX Alumni Mission Statement

We are a group of volunteers who are dedicated to the advancement and promotion of the best interests of StFX University.

To foster and encourage in alumni, the present student body, faculty, and interested persons, a spirit of loyalty to St. Francis Xavier University.

StFX Alumni History

The St. Francis Xavier University's Alumni Association was established in 1893 for to promote the University to the outside world and ensure that the University continued to thrive as a key player in post secondary education. Today, there are more than 40,000 StFX Alumni and the Alumni Association and Alumni Office at StFX work hard to maintain ties with alumni all over the world.



Alumni Association Today

- Alumni includes any graduate of StFX, or student who has completed a year at StFX/Coady International Institute
- There are no dues for members and a chapter can be set up in any community
- The Alumni Association helps to coordinate activities for groups all over the world. Alumni groups and chapters are as diverse as their geographical regions; they sponsor a wide range of events such as
 - Alumni Golf tournaments
 - New student send-offs
 - StFX Day celebrations
 - Community service projects
 - President's Reception's
 - Pub Nights
 - Athletic events
 - Much much more



Homecoming weekend, traditionally held during the weekend before Thanksgiving, is the largest alumni event coordinated by the Alumni Office. Each five-year class holds a dinner/event and is invited to participate, but we encourage alumni from all years to return to X, enjoy the festivities and re-connect with old and new friends. The program offers an exciting and rewarding schedule of events for alumni and guests. This is a chance for alumni to meet up with old friends, strengthen ties with their alma mater and see first-hand the changes that have taken place on campus. It is always a great weekend and Alumni & friends are happy they made the trip.

Organizing an Alumni Chapter

1. Contact the StFX Alumni Office

- Receive start up information
- Get advice, support and the tools required
- List of alumni in your geographical area
- Copy of the Chapter Handbook
- Contact list of other Chapter contacts

[The StFX Alumni Association is governed by a Constitution and a Code of Conduct / Policies and Procedures.]



2. Select key alumni to assist

Focus on those who are positive, fun and energetic. This is critical. The support of your volunteer team is crucial to Chapter success.

3. Carry out an e-mail and/or phone blitz

Give all alumni the opportunity to join the Chapter and continue to be a part of the StFX family.

4. Create active responsibilities for your members.

Everyone wants to feel that their participation has worth and that they can contribute to continued success.

5. Provide feedback to the University.

Help us help you.

Leadership

A solid Chapter structure leads to your success. Find your champions and build your network. These are key leadership positions in your chapter:

- President
- Vice-president
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Past-president
- A local youth from a recognized Junior Achievement program could be asked to join the chapter executive which may inspire local youth to realize their potential and see first-hand the benefits of life-long commitment and association with StFX.

It takes many to create success but without assistance, volunteer burn out is a reality. Offer a term for each position; a specific time for your executive roles allows for turnover and increased

knowledge and opportunity throughout your volunteer base. Chapters require executives; the one-person-show model does not work.

Reaching out to new alumni strengthens your chapter. Some ways to reach out include: congratulating seniors from your chapter area on December 3 as they receive their X-Ring, welcoming them back to the chapter after graduation; encouraging them to stay connected to StFX through involvement with you.

Event Planning

Successful events are critical to chapter success by engaging alumni and keeping them connected.

Typically a chapter holds two to three events per year. Each event shares the same purpose and goal, an opportunity to reminisce and build relationships but there will be differentiation. Not every event will appeal to everyone.

When planning an event, the Alumni Office can assist by providing:

- Event prizes
- List of alumni in the local area
Please work with the Programs Coordinator to create a list which works for your general area. Lists are created using the alumni record database and compiled using area postal codes. If you want to ensure that an area is included in your list, be sure to highlight this in your request.
- Event support and advice
- Best practices
- Advertising
- Online ticket sales
- StFX Chapter e-mail address and access to webspace.

There are many event possibilities; be creative in your selection. Some event ideas include:

- Pub Nights. Encourage alumni to get together at a local pub to celebrate.
- President's Receptions are co-hosted by the Chapter and the University. This is an excellent opportunity for alumni to gather.
- Celebrate StFX Day (Feast of Saint Francis Xavier, December 3rd).
- Host a send-off during the summer for students from their area who will be attending StFX in the fall. Engage students with excitement and interactive events.
- Engage in community oriented activities, i.e. green space clean-up or offer a service related activity that matches the co-operative ideals of StFX.

- Capitalize on a community events, i.e. join together to go to the Calgary Stampede parade, cheer on the Moncton Wildcats, etc.
- Host a picnic, brunches, barbecues, etc. Use the family theme and model your event on how a family gets together.
- Get together to watch a webcast of a StFX Athletic game.
- Cheer on your favourite X team when they come to town.
- Host a golf tournament.
- Offer, if possible, discounted event prices for young alumni to encourage their attendance and participation.



Hosting the Successful Event

The use of a to-do list or checklist will help your chapter organize their efforts for an event. Some elements that your checklist should include are:

- Establish an organizing/working committee
- Confirm date of event
- Notify the Alumni Office of the event
- Establish a budget for the event
- Establish a venue in which to host the event
- Confirm venue one week prior to event
- Establish invitation list/contact the alumni office for a local alumni list
- Send invitations
- Make follow-up phone calls after mailing out the invitations
- All StFX events should display a StFX crest or banner

A distinct date/time each year gives local area alumni an X event to look forward to. This will also serve to maintain momentum.

The welcome is a key ingredient to each event. Schedule a volunteer to act as a greeter to ensure that everyone who comes feel the Xaverian welcome.

There are many options to announce/communicate your event. A variety of communication methods works best:

- e-mail/phone tree communication

- use of social media
- StFX Alumni website event list and online community
- free advertising in community bulletins
- local radio

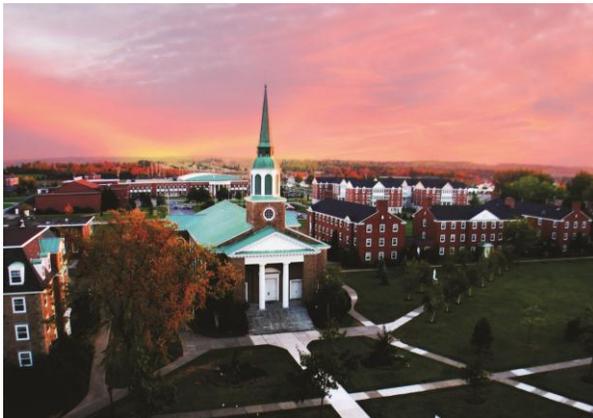
Ask attendees what method works best for them. Social media has been described as the “fast food” invitation while a calling tree as the “gourmet dinner”. Phone calls, although more time consuming, provide the personal touch and offer an opportunity to update information.

After your event is complete;

- Send a report and photos to the Alumni Office
- Survey attendees and solicit feedback

Finances and Support

It is recommended that Chapters set up a bank account. A Chapter is a non-profit organization and the account should be set up accordingly. Your local bank can provide assistance with account



set up for a non-profit organization. The overall functioning of the chapter should be one of self-reliance. Each event or activity should be planned to be self-supporting. Membership in a StFX chapter should not be contingent upon dues.

The Alumni Office will do its best to assist your chapter; however, financial independence for the effective operation of your chapter is expected. An application for event funding can be made to the Alumni Office.

Liability

We value our volunteers and want them to feel secure when acting on our behalf. Organizers of events can be held personally liable for acts or omissions in running events if certain rules are not followed.

According to the Canadian Universities Reciprocal Insurance Exchange “any officer, director, etc., including volunteers” while acting on behalf of the university is insured.

Their (CURIE) approach to “while acting on behalf of” is that the individuals involved have direct approval of the University to act in that capacity and that the University is aware of and has approved the activity.



Therefore, the University will only assume liability and insure approved activities (through the Advancement Department) over which it has at least some control. The University will not assume liability or insure activities over unapproved, unknown events for which the institution has no control.

To meet these requirements, the chapter must provide the alumni office with a complete written description of the event being proposed by the chapter prior to its occurrence. In response, the Alumni Office will provide the chapter with written approval in advance of the event.

This process will provide chapter volunteers with a greater sense of security in their event planning.

Start Here ... Go Anywhere

