THE WKU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION & THE ALUMNI FAMILY

The WKU Alumni Association’s **Vision** is for each member of the WKU Alumni Family to embrace the Spirit and develop an unwavering, lifelong relationship with WKU.

Our **Mission** is to cultivate the WKU Spirit by engaging all members of the alumni family in the life of the institution.

Our **Overarching Goals** are to:

- Cultivate the WKU Spirit
- Build Lifelong Relationships
- Engage the WKU Family in the life of the Institution
- Enhance the financial capacity of the Alumni Association

The Alumni Association’s **Purpose** is to preserve and build upon the Spirit that makes this institution special. To accomplish these goals, we need to do the following:

- **S** Serve members of the WKU Family with passion and enthusiasm
- **P** Perpetuate the WKU Spirit through programs, services, and traditions
- **I** Insist upon integrity, ethical behavior, trustworthiness, and professionalism
- **R** Respect all members of the WKU Family equally.
- **I** Involve diverse members of the WKU Family in the life of the institution.
- **T** Think strategically and proactively.
A Student for Four Years, An Alumnus for Life

The WKU Alumni Association (WKUAA) takes pride in fostering the WKU Spirit with the Alumni Family across the globe. We strive to provide quality opportunities to allow alumni to stay engaged with their alma mater. We value our alumni base and know we couldn’t accomplish our goals without the dedication of Alumni Volunteers across the world.

Ways to “stay connected” to WKU Post Graduation:

I. Alumni Chapters
II. Alumni Interest Groups
III. Alumni Ambassadors

I. WKU ALUMNI CHAPTER

An Alumni Chapter is a regional program based on geographic locations throughout the world that enable alumni to remain close to their alma mater, regardless of their location. There are no membership fees to be a part of a local Chapter.

A Chapter is led by a President and Chapter Leadership Committee made up of local alumni leaders who act as ambassadors promoting the relationship between alumni and the University. The Alumni Association provides leadership, guidance, and certain resources in support of Chapters, but the level of involvement and actual coordination of a chapter is driven by Chapter volunteers.

Benefits of Chapters in Communities
The Alumni Association provides unique opportunities to engage alumni and encourage them to socialize with old friends, network with WKU business contacts, and give back to the community virtually and around the world.

- Increased Degree Value: Through your leadership and efforts in gathering alumni and friends, WKU will gain a more visible presence in local communities. WKU will be seen by communities as an outstanding school that produces active, involved graduates, who engage themselves with the community and remain in contact with their alma mater.
- Volunteer Recognition: Through your leadership within the WKU community, you will be recognized as a key volunteer and ambassador of the University in your local community.
• **Networking:** As an ambassador of the University, you will have the opportunity to build relationships with new friends, business acquaintances, and personal contacts.

• **Shared Experiences:** You have the unique opportunity to gather with fellow Hilltopper alumni, students, parents, and friends who share a common bond – The WKU Spirit and your experience and future involvement.

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**Starting an Alumni Chapter**

The purpose of starting a Chapter shall be:

• To establish a mutually beneficial relationship between WKU, its alumni and friends within the region you reside
• To recruit and facilitate connections between alumni and supporters of WKU
• To sponsor and support programs and activities that will enhance the image and mission of WKU

**Initial Interest**

To gauge interest in the region to develop a Chapter, we suggest the following procedures:

• An alumnus in the area must have a strong desire to form a chapter. Chapters are volunteer-driven with support from the Alumni Association.
• The alumni volunteer will write an interest letter to fellow alumni in the area and send to the Alumni Association.
• The Alumni Association will send that letter in a mass email to the area. The interest letter will also have a link to a survey, created through the WKUAA website. The survey information will be tallied and sent back to the alumni volunteer to determine if there is enough interest for chapter formation.
• If enough alumni interest, a committee meeting will be scheduled to discuss the next plans of action. Consult the Alumni Association for an initial chapter meeting agenda.

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**Chapter Level of Involvement / Event Expectations**

Chapter leaders choose their level of involvement. The leadership committee may choose to plan one event a year or 10 events. There are also no event requirements. Chapter leaders choose the type of events planned. The Alumni Association wants the chapter leadership committee to choose what activities work best for their area instead of the Association making certain events required.

Chapters are awarded annually based on certain successful events, not solely on the number of events. See the Awards and Recognition section for additional information. Financial resources vary per chapter depending on their level of involvement. See Chapter Funding for more information.
Chapter Membership
Membership to a Chapter shall consist of all individuals with an interest in the welfare of WKU, including but not limited to alumni, parents, friends and students who reside and receive mail in the region. There is no membership fee to be a part of a local Chapter; however, an Alumni Association membership is strongly encouraged.

Chapter Leadership Team
Each Chapter must have a President plus three additional committee members. Titles and roles of the three additional members are at the discretion of the planning committee. Election of President/committee roles should take place by June 30 for the upcoming fiscal year. Chapter executive officers and corresponding responsibilities are determined by the committee, but must be approved by the Alumni Association Board of Directors by June 30.

Chapter Expectations
Chapters are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the goals and mission of WKU. The purpose of the Chapter shall be to cultivate enthusiasm and foster a mutually beneficial relationship among alumni and their alma mater. The Chapter serves to increase alumni participation and increase awareness in the region of the progress and needs of the University.

Chapter Requirements:

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<td>Operate on the University’s fiscal calendar of July 1 – June 30.</td>
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<td>Have a Chapter Leadership Committee consisting of a minimum of four members. One member must serve as President of the Chapter. Titles and roles of the three additional members are at the discretion of the planning committee.</td>
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<td>The Leadership Committee should be appointed by June 30 for the upcoming fiscal year and approved by the Alumni Association.</td>
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<td>Appoint a committee member (typically the President) to serve as the liaison for the Alumni Association.</td>
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<td>Propose a preliminary annual calendar of events to the Alumni Association by August 31.</td>
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<td>Hold two executive committee meetings with Alumni Association staff in attendance.</td>
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<td>Any additional committee meetings must be placed on the Alumni Association calendar in advance and a post meeting summary reported back to the Alumni Association within two weeks.</td>
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<td>All chapter activity must be sent to the Alumni Association to be placed on the WKUAA calendar of events.</td>
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<td>Submit a mid-year chapter report <a href="http://www.alumni.wku.edu/chapterreport">www.alumni.wku.edu/chapterreport</a> to the WKU Alumni Association by January 31 and a year-end report by June 30.</td>
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If chapter activity is ever in question, the Alumni Association has the right to schedule mandatory meetings with the executive committee, eliminate chapter funding, and cease the chapter’s existence as an official WKU alumni group.

**Alumni Association Provides Alumni Chapters:**

- An Alumni Association Program Coordinator to assist with chapter coordination but also to oversee that chapter activity is being conducted in a manner consistent with the goals and mission of WKU.

- Alumni Association Program Coordinator to attend certain events annually. Every effort will be made to have WKUAA representation at large chapter events, but AA attendance will be determined on a case by case basis.

- Event Calendar – The Alumni Association will provide an online calendar for all chapter activity.

- The Alumni Association will design and send email invitations (no limit on number of emails) from our office, as long as information is received in a timely manner.

- One event mailing (self mailer/invitation in envelope/newsletter format) annually for area Alumni Association members only.

- Annual Chapter tool kit, consisting of nametags, table tents, and 50 custom chapter red towels.

- WKUAA will request student ambassadors for events (SAA and Spirit Masters), Big Red, Wally, and university speakers and coaches for chapter functions but cannot guarantee their attendance. The Alumni Association will pay for all expenses associated with these requests.

- For charged events, credit cards MUST be run through WKUAA’s online reservation system or with the Virtual Merchant mobile device. For security, credit card information will NOT be accepted on paper.

- For events with registration, WKUAA will coordinate registrations/financials and supply reports to chapter committee members on request.

- For charged events, a 5% administrative fee will be charged to the chapter to cover credit card fees associated with our online reservation system.

- Providing all necessary information is collected, a check will be processed within two weeks of the event and mailed to the specified alumni chapter member.

- WKUAA will provide a Volunteer Section in each issue of WKU Spirit magazine. Alumni Chapters may use that space to feature upcoming events or chapter news.
Chapter Funding

Official Alumni Chapters receive an annual budget from the WKU Alumni Association for programming needs. The WKUAA must approve the use of the funding prior to spending. Chapters do not receive a check for the events; however, upon spending approval from the Alumni Association, WKUAA will pay invoices up to the budgeted amount for chapter programs from the Bowling Green office.

| Chapters holding 1-2 approved events per year receive $500 annually. |
| Chapters holding 3-4 approved events per year receive $1000 annually. |
| Chapters holding 5 or more approved events per year receive $2000 annually. |

*If the Alumni Association initiates and hosts an event in a chapter area, all funding for the event will be covered by the Alumni Association.

Chapter Awards and Recognition

Chapter members are invited to the annual Summit Awards Volunteer Recognition Banquet held on Thursday evening of Homecoming week. This event allows WKU to properly thank the hundreds of volunteers who give their time to the betterment of the University.

Alumni Chapters are recognized through special awards for events held in their community the previous fiscal year. The Alumni Association chooses the awards from the mid-year and annual report provided by the chapter and from first-hand account of the actual events.

Social Media “Webby” Award

This award is given to any alumni group that has distinguished itself through an exceptional communications program. This includes website, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and/or other applicable links in the nomination form. A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

Fellowship Award

This award is given to any alumni group that has distinguished itself through an outstanding social program or event. A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

Membership Award

This award is given to any alumni group that has distinguished itself through an exceptional membership program or event that supports the membership campaign of the Alumni Association. A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.
**Spirit of Service Award**

The award recognizes an exemplary National Service project and encourages innovative ideas in existing programs as well as new projects. A project award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

**Beacon Award**

This award is given to any alumni group that has distinguished itself through an exceptional new and innovative program or event. A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

**Scholarship & Fundraising Award**

This award is given to any affiliate group that has distinguished itself through an outstanding scholarship/fundraising program or event. A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

**Student Interaction Award**

This award is given to any alumni group that has distinguished itself through outstanding student support and interaction. A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

**Young Alumni Involvement Award**

This award is given to any alumni group that has distinguished itself through an outstanding program or event that specifically targets, reaches, and increases recruitment and participation in the Alumni Association and alumni group for our young alumni population (10 years since graduation). A program award of $500 will be given to the winning group to be used in future programming.

## II. Alumni Interest Groups

Alumni Interest Groups (AIGs) are volunteer organizations comprised of alumni and friends of WKU who have common interests around student organizations, common cultural interests, or professional interests. AIGs are volunteer driven, but groups may use the Alumni Association website, reservation system, listserv, and mass emails for AIG purposes. Examples of AIGs are Book Clubs, Knitters, Music Lovers, Softball Club, Latino Toppers, etc.
III. Alumni Ambassador Program

An Alumni Ambassador works as an official representative of the WKU Alumni Association and connects with alumni in communities across the country. Ambassadors are typically in locations that do not have an active alumni chapter; however, a chapter member can also serve as an Ambassador. Ambassadors serve as the WKU contact for that geographic area, assisting the Alumni Association when WKU travels to their area, offers advice to fellow alumni moving to the area, can serve as mentors for college students from their hometown, and assists the Admissions Office with recruitment of students from the area.

WKU Alumni Ambassadors receive a WKU Alumni Association Polo, as well as a nametag and WKU information to be used to promote WKU.

Contact Us
For more information on an Alumni Chapter, Alumni Interest Group, or the Alumni Ambassador Program, please contact Scott Shonk, Programming Coordinator for the WKU Alumni Association, at scott.shonk@wku.edu or 270-745-4395.