

**Metropolitan State University**  
**Alumni Association Board Meeting**  
July 27, 2021, 5:30-7 p.m. Via Zoom

**Board members attending:** Samuel Farrand, Thulani Jwacu, Salman Mian, Fidelis Odozi, Scott Pilgram, Andrea Steen, Nancy Uden, Shanasha Whitson

**Board members not attending:** Fowsiya Dahir, Kjersten Jaeb, Sam Mwangi

**Staff attendees:** Sai Chang, Kristine Hansen, Noriko Ramberg

Nancy Uden convened the meeting at 5:33 p.m. Uden thanked the Board for their FY21 service, time, skill and flexibility during the pandemic and highlighted the following:

- The Membership Committee brought in 8 new board members and identified 5 alumni interested in joining the committees.
- The Events Committee had two high-quality events in marketing and nonprofit fields. Some ideas have come through Kristine Hansen's meetings with the college deans to have future college-specific events prior to the start of the topic's capstone class.
- The Fundraising Committee's diligence brought in the success of Give to the Max Day fundraising and 100% giving participation by the Alumni Board.

Some updates on the board membership:

- Sandy Best completed her term and left the Board at the end of FY21.
- Lucky Lee resigned due to a demanding job commitment. He hopes to reengage at a later time.
- Lyna Nyamwaya is taking another leave of absence in FY22.

**Consent agenda:**

The notes from the May 25 board meeting, committee reports and FY22 budget were sent in advance and were reviewed by the board members. Motion to approve these reports was made by Scott Pilgram, seconded by Salman Mian, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Board election:**

Eight board prospects were approved by the Board:

- |                      |                     |                       |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • Brittanie Aune '20 | • Tom Krueger '17   | • Ryan Ringwelski '21 |
| • Amanda Clark '17   | • Annie Mueller '18 | • Shahbaz Shah '15    |
| • Deidra Isaac '16   | • Carol Njogu '11   |                       |

They are a nice addition to the current 12-member Board.

**Orientation and mentor program:**

Each member is expected to be a mentor to a new board member. Members are asked to review the "New board member mentoring" document and let Nancy/Kristine know if an informational meeting needs to be set up after Labor Day. Nancy and Kristine will e-introduce a mentor to a mentee.

Orientation for the new members will be held after Labor Day to go over the expectations and responsibilities prior to the Sept. 25 retreat. Committee chairs are requested to attend the orientation.

## **Board survey results:**

This survey was beneficial in assessing where the Board stands and gave some insights on some understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

### *Purpose and structure*

- Most members agreed that the board structure is on-track but needs to improve in gaining a working-knowledge of the bylaws.
- Discussion on the appropriate size of membership is needed.
- The current bylaws need to be examined and updated.

### *Committees*

- Most members agreed that the committees are functioning well and serving their purpose. There were some that disagreed, so the Board will need to look further in clarifying the disparities and set clear goals for FY22.

### *Board meeting*

- Most members agreed on the current meeting style. There was some disagreement about the schedule, the number of meetings, time and length.

### *Membership and orientation*

- Most members favored the increased number of board members. In seeking members, the Membership Committee should use a wide variety of referral sources within the communities we serve and also utilize their own network to recruit a diverse group of board prospects.

### *Self-assessment*

- Most members feel they are comfortable with the expectations and understand the purpose and responsibilities of the Board.
- The office will need to think of better ways of communicating with the members without so many attachments prior to the board meeting.

### *Feedback*

- Things were handled as well as it could be during the challenging pandemic.
- We should invite someone from outside of Metro State to learn from other similar schools and learn what they do to have a successful organization.
- Plan to invite Rita Dibble to a future meeting to talk about how to fundraise successfully.

### *Board members' wish list*

- Starting an initiative in mentoring and a career connection program
- Making sure meetings end on time
- Elevating affinity for Metro State and alumni engagement
- Outreach in communities of color and immigrants
- Exposing students to the Alumni Association before they graduate
- Hosting a call-a-thon to thank recent donors and/or solicit donors

## **Ideas from small group discussion**

### *Topic - Onboarding*

To create more memorable onboarding experience for new board members, the group suggests the following:

- Create a checklist of to-dos
- Have an overview of committee types and tasks by inviting committee chairs to the onboarding orientation
- Take an objective approach to identify skillsets instead of self-filled skills
- Engage in a creative team introduction to help put a face to the name
- Clearly state goals, responsibilities and mission of the Board and committees
- Offer a campus tour

### *Topic - Board meeting*

- Number and length of meeting is appropriate.
- Be creative in utilizing the 90-minute meeting time by focusing more on “doing” than “listening”.
- Flexibility to miss a meeting should be allowed to accommodate the needs of personal and community engagements and to choose attending by in-person or virtual mode.
- Utilize technology to increase participation.
- Be specific in actions so the Board can continue to hold each other accountable and committed.
- Connection—In-person meetings are critical for building trusting relationships. We want to know each other better and learn from one another.
- When it is possible to have in-person meetings, we should consider longer meeting time and less frequency.

### **Other business and comments:**

- President’s social is Thursday, August 5.
- Alumni Board Retreat is Saturday, September 25. It may be a masked gathering.
- Definition of a good mentor to a new Board member
  - Be available for questions
  - Offer encouragement
  - Make sure he/she feels welcomed before and after meetings
  - Make sure that he/she is oriented and confident in the works of the Board, so they are ready to take actions
  - Feel good about being a mentor and willing to learn something from a mentee
- The surplus in the FY21 budget went back to the general fund of the Foundation. The FY22 budget is set and approved, but if the Board needs more funding for events and projects, the Foundation Board is supportive in considering additional funding to foster alumni engagement.
- FY21 Alumni Engagement Score matrix will be shared by Kristine when it becomes available.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Mian, seconded by Pilgram, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Noriko Ramberg, Office Coordinator