

ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS

Here are a few tips, timelines and tricks for a successful partnership between Alumni Relations and our volunteers.

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ALUMNI PROGRAMS

Our philosophy is that if we assist our volunteers and equip them with the tools and resources in their roles, they can spend their time coming up with exciting ways to engage with alumni and students, and representing the University.

We have two main regionally – based volunteer programs that operate within our Advancement team. Volunteers in these programs work to connect with all alumni, regardless of faculty or graduation year, who live and/or work in a specific location.

1. **Chapters** are created for areas that have a high volume of alumni located within a reasonable distance of a city's center. Executive teams are made up of alumni volunteers who have a time commitment of roughly 5-10 hours a month. We expect Chapters to have programming or communications once a quarter.
2. **Ambassadors** are in areas where we have less alumni, and often represent larger geographical regions (i.e. states or countries). There are typically one or two alumni in these designated regions who act as Waterloo representatives or points-of-contact. Some ambassadors chose to host 1-2 events annually, but this is not a requirement of the role.

WORKING WITH ADVANCEMENT

The Office of Advancement is here to help! Here are six common ways Alumni Relations collaborates with and supports volunteers:

1. Understanding the Waterloo community in your area.

With our robust database that we are continually improving and growing, we can provide a snapshot of the alumni in your region. Some statistics available include: how many alumni live or work in your area, what they graduated in, and what industry are they working in. These statistics can help you understand what initiatives might be successful.

2. Developing a plan.

How do you see your next year engaging alumni within your region? We can help develop a framework of when key activities or communications should take place, to ensure you are being effective with your time. We are able to provide the correct resources to support you. As well, we can

support the development of your ideas and concepts, by sharing successful ideas that have been done before, or tips and tricks to help you go from concept to reality.

3. Communicating with alumni and students in your region.

We have a multi-faceted mass (broadcast) email platform that pulls from the university's database to send emails to alumni based on geographical information. This allows for professional, branded HTML designed emails that follow the Canadian Anti-Spam legislation guidelines.

Emails must be booked a minimum of 2 weeks before your scheduled date, and are subject to the email schedule. We send all alumni emails for the University through one system, and do our best to only email a group of alumni once a day.

4. Event registration systems and virtual platforms.

Our event registration system works with our email platform to customize links for all alumni. This means that when an alumnus gets an email about an event, they can click the link to register and the contact information that we already have on file for them will appear. This allows for a quicker process so alumni do not need to fill out the same information every time, or it allows alumni to make changes to their contact information if needed. Keeping contact information current is a key component to successfully engaging with alumni.

This system can collect ticket fees, create different ticket types, or operate for free events. Alumni Relations can send weekly reports or updates on registration numbers leading up to your event (upon request).

Virtual events platforms include:

- **Hopin.** A robust system that integrates live broadcasting, live chat and Q&A function, networking, and moderated break out spaces.
- **Zoom.** Webinar and meeting functions for guests to all be on camera, simple breakout rooms, and no login required.

Alumni Relations can act as technical supports for your events when using these systems so you can focus on hosting or leading.

5. On-campus connections.

The Advancement team has access to great researchers, industry experts, and student groups. We would be happy to help you find the perfect event speaker, or introduce you to a group on campus that would make for a great partnership.

6. Budget.

Alumni Relations has budget set aside for volunteer-led programming. Prior to planning, consider what the cost might be and prepare a simple breakdown for the Alumni Relations team. Depending on the scope and goals of the initiative, we can work together to see where funding from Alumni Relations would be a good fit, or how we can help with some cost recovery solutions and strategies.

As a public and non-profit institution, we take spending very seriously and have limited budgets. Costs need to be approved prior to using University budget.

GLOBAL ALUMNI VOLUNTEER NETWORK GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In 2018, after input from our alumni, volunteers, and the Alumni Council, it was clear that there was an opportunity for volunteer activities to be more connected to the University and align with more meaningful alumni engagement activities and Advancement goals. At the same time, it was clear that alumni-to-alumni programming was not only well received, but allowed those within the Waterloo community to create authentic and meaningful connections with each other and the University. We know that a strategically integrated volunteer model is a partnership and can have a profound impact on alumni/student engagement and the reputation of the university. We also know that our volunteers are multi-skilled, keen, and always striving to find exciting ways to engage with alumni and students. We wanted to find the ‘sweet spot’ – the intersection point between key university goals and the passion, knowledge and skills our volunteers bring.

In order to achieve this model, we identified 5 goals from top priorities within Alumni Relations and the University. We encourage volunteers to create and implement volunteer-led content or activities that they feel are relevant and meaningful while incorporating the GAVN goals.

Please watch the 5 training videos and complete the quiz that are structured around the 5 goals, this can be found under the [Training](#) section of the Volunteer Hub.

Goals	Outcomes: Examples of volunteer activities that support this goal
Goal 1: Alumni Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing alumni events and outreach activities 1-1 meetings with alumni Networking Keeping alumni informed on campus news
Goal 2: Student Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcoming co-op students who are beginning a work term in your area Hosting a special pre-event gathering to get to know students Participating in alumni panels (ex. Campus Co-op Connection event)
Goal 3: Supporting Co-operative Education Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring a co-op student Referring a potential employer to Hire Waterloo Educating others on the benefits of co-op students
Goal 4: Recruiting the Future of Waterloo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting Waterloo as a great academic option to prospective students by sharing resources Assisting with recruitment activities in your area Discussing your experience at Waterloo with local prospective students in-person or through email inquiries
Goal 5: Fundraising – Understand Waterloo as a Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answering questions about giving to Waterloo Directing people who are interested in donating to Support Waterloo