

# The Alumni Association of The City College of New York Guidelines for Affiliate Groups and Chapters

The Alumni Association of CCNY engages alumni worldwide through several programs. Alumni volunteers are critical to successful alumni engagement. The primary goal of the Alumni Associations Affiliate Groups and Chapters is to engage as many alumni as possible in meaningful relationships through events and programs.

This document is designed to offer answers, ideas, and support to our enthusiastic alumni volunteers in their efforts to build a solid, proactive, self-sustaining affiliate group or chapter.

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## DEFINITIONS AND HISTORY

### The Alumni Association of The City College of New York

The first graduating class of 1853 of the New York Free Academy (later renamed to The City College of New York) organized the Alumni Association to form a community of friends with a shared experience and common goals. In 1913, the Association was incorporated, and is governed by a Board of Directors.

The purpose and objectives of the Alumni Association are to advance the interests and welfare of the College, to foster a spirit of fraternity/sorority and goodwill among graduates, to serve alumni and to offer financial, technical, and networking support for today's students.

### Affiliate Group of the Alumni Association of CCNY

A special interest group within the Alumni Association of CCNY membership.

Representing special concerns, interests, and educational specialties, the Association serves as the umbrella of (currently) fifteen affiliate groups: Athletics Alumni, Architecture Alumni, Art Alumni, Asian Alumni, Black Alumni, Center for Workers Education Alumni, Communications Alumni, Education Alumni, Latino Alumni, Political Science Alumni, ROTC Alumni, Science Alumni, Young Professional Alumni, Business and Economics Alumni, and Engineering School Alumni. The groups are each governed by a voluntary Board of Directors with officers and conduct activities to benefit alumni and today's students. These affiliate groups and their activities tend to be in the tri-state area.

### Chapter of the Alumni Association of CCNY

Groups of Alumni Association members and friends that form in specific geographical areas.

In recognition of the growing geographical diversity of alumni, the chartering of Alumni Chapters began after World War II. Fifty dues paying members living in a city outside the New York metropolitan area can secure a charter from the Alumni Association as an official Chapter. Chapters currently include Washington, D.C., Palm Beach/South Florida, Gulf Coast of Florida, Northern California, Southern California, Northern Nevada/Las Vegas, Houston TX, Northern New Jersey, and Connecticut. Regional chapters are accessible, fun, friendly, local connections to the Alumni Association. They appeal to a wide variety of alumni by offering a diverse range of activities.

## ORGANIZATION

### Creation of an Affiliate Group

In order to apply for consideration as an Affiliate group, a list of not less than 25 Active Members in good standing ("good standing" to mean currently paid up for at least sixty days prior to any date on which the status of their membership shall be in question, as defined in Article I, Section 1 (b) of the By-Laws of the Alumni Association) must be submitted to the Executive Director. *(Approved 4/24/2025)*

### Forming a regional Chapter

In order to apply for consideration as a Local or Regional Chapter, a list of not less than 25 Active Members in good standing ("good standing" to mean currently paid up for at least sixty days prior to any date on which the status of their membership shall be in question, as defined in Article I, Section 1 (b) of the By-Law of the Alumni Association) must be submitted to the Executive Director. *(Approved 9/21/95)*

### Termination or Suspension of an Affiliate or Chapter

In addition to any other actions which the Board of Directors may choose to take, it may terminate or suspend the operations of, remove or suspend the officers and directors of, or withhold financial support and services from any regional Chapter or Affiliate Group in violation of any rule or regulation adopted by the Board of Directors. *(Approved by Board of Directors 6/4/1989, revised 7/01/2016)*

## EXPECTATIONS

- Plan a calendar of diverse programs aimed at membership engagement and development.
- Coordinate event/program logistics and progress with the Alumni Association staff.
- Promote events/programs through social media and direct mail/email.
- Provide staff with a brief annual report (due on or before June 30, as per the Association by-laws, Article II, section 4) that identifies board members, planned activities, and accomplishments for the year.

## STRUCTURE

### By-Laws

All Affiliate Groups and Chapters must have a copy of their current by-laws on file with the Alumni Association parent office. The Alumni Office should be kept informed of any changes made to these By-Laws as they occur.

### Board of Directors

Ideally, an Affiliate or Chapter Board should number 4-12 members, with a maximum of 15. Officer positions must include a President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. We also suggest selecting two student reps to serve on your affiliate Board. All work or assignments should be shared and approved by all Board members.

### Rosters

The Alumni office will prepare official Rosters of the Officers and Directors of Affiliates and Chapters. Each Fiscal year the Affiliate President or Secretary must provide the Alumni office with an updated contact list of current officers and board members for the new fiscal year. This should be submitted in the annual report (due in June) to the Alumni Association parent office.

### Minutes

Following any official Board meeting, the Secretary of the group should file the official minutes with the parent Alumni office. The Alumni office staff are not responsible for taking minutes at your meetings. If the Secretary is not present, please assign another Board member at the meeting to take minutes. The Alumni office can reproduce minutes of meetings for distribution with the notice of the next meeting.

### Board Meetings

Schedule 2-4 Board meetings a year, ideally before events or activities. Do not overcommit volunteer Board members with too many meetings.

### Committees

Set up a committee structure by asking for volunteers to serve on each committee i.e. program committee, membership committee, awards committee. Encourage all Board members to serve on at least one committee. Have each committee select a chair. Make sure members buy into the objective of each committee.

### Set attainable or reachable goals

Do not overburden Board Members. It is suggested to plan 2-4 programs annually, which involve alumni and students (at minimum, one social event and one professional development event annually).

## EVENT and MEETING PLANNING

The Alumni Association maintains a professional staff member to assist with programming and group organization. Active alumni should contact the Event Manager for assistance in planning and programming for their groups. The date, location, and pricing must be locked in at least 6 weeks before the date. Advertisements / design must be completed 4 or more weeks prior to an event. If the affiliate group does not meet this deadline for fundraising events they are required to PUSH the event back for proper planning and promotion.

### Room Reservations

Staff will arrange for meeting space for groups on campus, and if necessary, in the New York Metropolitan area. Contact the Event Manager for assistance. Please note there is an application process for space on campus which requires submission at least 10 business days in advance. So please submit all details to our office at least 12 business days in advance to make sure the space can be requested in a timely fashion. Note there may be fees for A/V services, off-campus space rental, Security fees, Custodial fees, etc.

### Virtual Meetings

The Alumni Association has an enterprise Zoom account. Staff can arrange for a meeting link to be provided. Contact the Event Manager for assistance.

### Printing and Mailing

The Alumni office is equipped to help with printing and mailing services. This includes duplicating, printing, and research for your group meetings and events, design, etc. Costs for services and/or supplies may be passed along to the Alumni Affiliate & Chapter groups at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Due to the rising costs of printing and mailing, e-mail should be used whenever possible for event and meeting notice/advertisements. However, if a hard mailing is necessary, please note that content for the hard mailing must be received at least FIVE WEEKS (5) in advance of the meeting or activity for first-class mailings. Meeting notices should include date, time, and location of meeting and reply options as well as proposed program and/or agenda.

### Online Event Management

The Alumni Association uses *Constant Contact* for email marketing and on-line event management. If the affiliate does not already have a log-in, the staff can set-up access to Constant Contact *for 1 representative of the group*, preferably an Officer or member of your Board of Directors. With this access, you can design events, emails, flyers, etc. Constant Contact allows you to build both free and fee-based events. You will need approval from the Alumni Association staff to make an event "LIVE" or to send an email.

Please direct any additional event service requests to the Events Manager. Two (2) weeks advance notice is required to complete the processing of your request.

### Best Practices in Event planning/reporting

Begin planning programs 10 weeks in advance including an initial discussion with staff, preferably the Events Manager.

For each program, select one or two members of the board to serve as the program manager. This includes overseeing program logistics (venue selection, registration, set up, break down, local group promotion/social media etc.) and program follow-up.

Remember that you are representing the Alumni Association of CCNY when planning, communicating about, and executing events. Be upbeat, positive, and welcoming to all members.

Collaborate with other affiliate groups and/or chapters.

Record the event or take photos! Submit any materials to the staff (Event Manager) after the program along with a short summary of the program and the attendee list.

Help update association and college records by collecting business cards and current email addresses and submitting them to association staff.

## COMMUNICATION

### Email Marketing

As mentioned above, we use *Constant Contact* for email marketing and on-line event management. The AA staff can set-up remote access to Constant Contact *for 1 representative of your group*, preferably an Officer or member of your Board of Directors. With this access, you can design emails, review and define your assigned contacts/lists, etc. You will need approval from the Alumni Association staff to schedule/send the email.

Alternatively, if you'd like us to send something out for your group/chapter, please direct any e-mail marketing requests to the Events Manager. Two (2) weeks advance notice is necessary in order to complete the processing of your request. Please include any specific requirements like timeline for notice to be sent, how you want items to be sent, and to whom. (i.e., Members Only, or Members and non-members, etc.).

Please send all email communication and event scheduling through the AA's Constant Contact account system so that we achieve the following:

1. A consistent, central location for us to sync our central database list with yours.
2. A consistent way for us as an organization to do business with alumni, including taking RSVPs, payments, and contact information.
3. A consistent look and feel to information going out to alumni.
4. Financial ease – when transactions are handled by staff, the AA can easily track these transactions for reconciliation and auditing purposes.

### Website Maintenance

The Alumni Association parent office will provide an Affiliate/Chapter page on the Association website. If your Affiliate and/or Chapter chooses to maintain a website of its own, this is acceptable, however, the website MUST include and prominently display the logo, description, and contact information for the Alumni Association. Any externally held websites must also abide by the Alumni Association's Style Guide regulations (logo, fonts, messaging, etc.). If your website is not maintained/up to date, it will be requested that the website be taken down.

### Style Guide

There is a style guide for use of the Alumni Association logo and any/all official communication that goes out from the affiliate and/or chapter. We have specific fonts, logos, defined colors that will provide consistency on how the Alumni Association is portrayed both in print and digital media. Please inquire with staff for the most recent version of this document.

Also note, that the College has its own style guide and when referencing or utilizing the College name/logo -- you must abide by their rules and regulations, as per our Memorandum of Understanding with the College. You can access the College style guide [here](#).

### E-newsletters

Newsletters are a great way to keep members interested and up to date on activities and events. We suggest sending out a newsletter only once or twice a year. The newsletter could focus on activities and events of the group, a message from the president of the group, a message from

college representatives (i.e., Chair, Dean, Director of an academic discipline), class notes, or updates about your Board of Directors and/or alumni membership, stories about Career Achievement Honorees/Hall of Famers, etc. This is a great marketing tool which alumni enjoy reading like the *Alumni Beat*, only more specific to your Affiliate group.

### Social Media

Be active on social media. (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.). Love it or hate it, social media is here to stay, and it is a great way to engage recent alumni and current students. This is critical to our survival as an association. Use primarily to engage with surveys and conversation. But you can also use it to promote events and membership.

Be sure to abide by the Alumni Association's Social Media guidelines. If you do not already have a copy of the approved guidelines, inquire with staff.

### Surveys

Survey your membership. Understand what members want and why they belong.

## **FINANCE MANAGEMENT**

### General

The goal is to increase alumni engagement through self-funded programs. The financial objective for group programs is to break even. Affiliates and chapters should work with the Event Manager when planning programs and developing pricing.

There was an allocation of funds provided to each affiliate group (\$1000.00 per fiscal year) for the purposes of programming/alumni engagement. This amount may change from year to year depending on how the association is doing financially. There is currently no allocation provided for chapters or affiliates. Information on how affiliates can eventually access their programming allocation is included below.

Very important, please note:

- The Alumni Association is a 501c3 and can accept tax-deductible donations (to the extent that the law allows). However, we are a membership service organization with a special relationship with the City College of New York. "Fundraisers" must be approved by staff and coordinated with the College as per our Memorandum of Understanding with the College.
- The Alumni Association staff must review and approve for all contracts with vendors, event locations, etc. A contract is required for all programs where a vendor is being paid a fee.

### Bank Accounts

As decided by the Board of Directors (December 2021), the Alumni Association will move to close all external bank accounts. Any Association Affiliate or Chapter with assets (cash) will be entitled to a Chase bank account, owned by the Alumni Association. Each affiliate will be given signatory and administrative access via the Affiliate/Chapter President and Treasurer.

Bank resolutions approved by the group shall not authorize withdrawals by cash. Current copies of all bank resolutions shall be filed with the Alumni Association Office.

*(Approved 10/12/1983)*

Each group shall require two (2) authorized signatures for withdrawals on all its bank accounts.

*(Approved 10/12/1983)*

### Event Income and Expenses

It is recommended that all fund collections take place via the parent office. Checks must be made out to "Alumni Association of CCNY" with the MEMO filled in with your Affiliate/Chapter and Event

name. Funds can also be collected via Constant Contact. For affiliates and chapters that choose to handle event funds separately, the affiliate/chapter Treasurer is required to submit to the Financial Coordinator on staff, within thirty (30) days, a financial report listing actual income and expenses for the event. A template for reporting can be provided if requested from staff.  
*(Approved 10/12/1983)*

Affiliate/Chapter Boards may decide on the purchase of products and/or services, and if necessary, the specific vendors needed to support/implement the affiliate/chapter event.

Whenever possible, the affiliate/chapter may request staff to provide its Tax Exemption Certificate, to a specific vendor, to eliminate sales taxes.

Receipts will be provided to the Financial Coordinator/Bookkeeper within 30 days of the completion of the event. Reimbursement of the expenses will be completed within 30 days of the submission of the receipts.

Revenue created by an affiliate/chapter event may be kept in the affiliate/chapter Chase bank account. These funds may be used for future event expenses; however, all expenses must be justified with receipts, and an explanation of how the expense supports an affiliate event or program, due to the Financial Coordinator immediately following use of affiliate funds.

Expenses incurred by the parent office in connection with an affiliate/chapter event will be deducted from any revenue created by the event. If no revenue is generated by the event or if expenses incurred by the parent office exceed the revenue, the outstanding expense balance will be transferred from the affiliate/chapter bank account, within 30 days of the completion of the Event.

The affiliate/chapter Treasurer is expected to present to its board members an event financial report which includes revenue, expenses, and profit, within 30 days from the completion of the event.

#### Annual Allocation of Funds for programming (Affiliates only)

The annual allocation for programming (currently suspended) must be used for membership engagement and/or programming to increase membership. Please note the following:

- It is not simply money deposited into a spending account. Each affiliate must qualify their expenses as programming/event expenses that engage or encourage membership in the association. Approval must be provided by the Executive Director.
- To qualify for the annual allocation, the parent office must receive the affiliate's annual report (due on or before June 30, as per the Association by-laws, Article II, section 4).
- Expenses must be discussed prior to commitment and payment issued directly from the parent office on the affiliate/chapter's behalf.
- If reimbursement is required, please submit all paperwork (invoice, receipts, and justification for the expense) to the Financial Coordinator immediately following the transaction.

#### Budget and Balances held with the parent office

If a group does not have a Chase bank account and a balance is held by the parent office, staff can provide, upon request, a financial report for Affiliate Groups itemizing the group's monthly income and expenses, noting the group's balance, if there is one.

*(Approved 10/12/1983, revised 7/27/1988, revised again 8/10/2023)*

#### Donations

Chapters and Affiliate Groups shall not solicit for, nor accept, donations or bequests without approval by the Board of Directors of the Corporation. They shall direct all offers of donations, and refer all proposals for the solicitation of donations to the staff for consideration.

*(Approved by Board of Directors 6/4/1989, revised 1/18/1995)*

## **GROWING MEMBERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT**

### Student Clubs

Reach out to student clubs with similar interests at the college to create a partnership with students before they graduate. Email staff for the most up-to-date list of student clubs operating on the CCNY campus and contact information.

### Membership Requirement

We suggest instilling a membership requirement in your annual award and/or scholarship events before an award is given. Encourage scholarship recipients to join affiliate Boards when they graduate.

### Mentoring

Involve students through mentoring or board involvement, which can be ongoing or a single experience; organize a social activity or meeting to hear student needs and interests. Be sure to act on specific needs of students so that they know this is not a futile exercise; set up a career fair or career forum for students; have successful alumni come to the college to inform them about the world of work.

### Graduate Salute, Divisional Graduation Ceremonies, and Commencement

Every affiliate should plan to participate in and/or table (advertise for the Alumni Association) during the College's Graduate Salute, Commencement ceremony, and any divisional graduation ceremonies that relate to the affiliate group. The parent office will arrange for the table and Alumni Association materials/give-a-ways, but the affiliate group must send a representative to assist in membership acquisition and young alumni engagement.