

SECTION II

COMMUNICATION

It is important to communicate the organization's message, activities, and existence to alumnae on both a local and global level, in order to gain membership, participation, and all levels of support.

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Web Guide

In addition to the programs, benefits, and resources offered through the AASC website, alumnae have access to the Online Community, comprising the Alumnae Directory, Career Connections, and Lifetime e-mail, available at <http://alumnae.smith.edu>

The Alumnae Directory register of Smith alumnae can be sorted by name, class, geography, and profession. For a password when entering for the first time, see the *Smith Alumnae Quarterly* subscription strip. There will be a seven-digit number, starting with the letters AV, above the mailing information. *Or contact the AASC (email/phone).*

The AASC also provides hosting and linkage to club and group websites. By linking the organization's page to the AASC web page you can make the organization available to current students, faculty, and fellow alumnae all around the world.

This guide offers helpful information on:

- setting up a website for the group
- obtaining host space
- linking the site to the AASC website
- privacy and policy issues

Planning Your Site

A web page can provide lots of information and be updated without costly printing. However, the information must be well organized and frequently updated to be useful to other alumnae. In the planning process, consider the following questions:

How will the online information complement newsletters or other print publications?

What content (information) do we want to have on the site?

Who will write and edit the information and prepare it for conversion to web files?

Who will design the web pages?

Who will maintain the pages and update them?

What links would be useful for volunteers? (For example, if the group volunteers at a school, consider a link to that school. If meeting at the top of Seattle's Space Needle, consider a link to their website.)

How can we share information and safeguard volunteer's privacy?

Be aware that pages will appear differently on different browsers, both because of the browser software itself and the specific preferences established by different users. Check pages on different types of browsers to see how the pages will appear to different users.

The equipment viewer's use will vary also. A page that relies heavily on graphics may frustrate viewers who must download over a slower modem. The download time can be extensive and some will not be able to view the graphics at all. Crop images to retain the key information and keep photos to approximately 2 x 2 inches. Use "thumbnail" images that can be expanded if the viewer wishes to take the time.

Except for password-protected sites, web pages can be viewed by anyone with a web connection. **Please review the privacy and policy section below for requirements and suggestions on dealing with online information sharing.**

Creating the Site

The following are needed to create a website:

A volunteer who will serve as website manager. This person must be willing to create and update pages by using HTML code language or software that converts word processing to HTML. The website will need to be updated frequently, at least monthly. Once a page is established, it should require about four hours of work to update monthly. Choose a volunteer who has enough time to invest in the project and can stay with it. The website is useless if it is neglected.

A writer/editor who will prepare text for conversion to HTML files. It's hard to read long pages of text on a screen, so this person should have skills in choosing, consolidating, and organizing information in a logical manner so it can be placed in different locations on the site.

Server space for your files. Once copy is converted to HTML files, it needs to be placed on a server (a dedicated computer) that can respond to requests for the files from anyone, anywhere, with an Internet connection. By agreement with a vendor, the Alumnae Association of Smith College is able to provide limited free server space to authorized alumnae. Please see the section on server space.

Content

Content includes all the text, images, photos, graphics, and charts that are placed on pages. Suggested content includes:

Organization news

A schedule of upcoming events

Volunteer opportunities

Information on how to pay dues

A link to the Smith College home page, which links to the AASC and other key Smith pages

For detailed explanations or extensive text, create a short version and a separate page for the long version. Viewers can then read a short summary and make a choice to look at the extended version.

If including any content, including text, graphics, and sound that the organization did not create, the organization must have the legal right (copyright) to use the material.

The photographs, graphics, and text found on the AASC web page and the Smith College web pages are copyrighted material. Please do **not**

Use the official seal of the Grécourt Gates

Use the seal of Smith College which depicts the goddess Sophia

Refer to the information as a publication of Smith College

Refer to the information as a publication of the AASC

Use the Alumnae Association of Smith College seal

Smith organizations may use the following:

Original images of the Grécourt Gates (i.e. an original drawing of the gates, a photograph)

Photographs of campus as long the organization has received written copyright permission

Smith College school colors (the official colors are white and gold, and the Pioneers, compete wearing blue and gold)
The Smith College diamond logo
Logos belonging to the organization
Images that belong in the public domain
Information from Smith College press releases
Downloadable images of and information about rules for use of the Smith logo may be found online at http://alumnae.smith.edu/volunteer/logo_usage.php .

Design

All the pages you create should share the same visual framework; each page should resemble the rest of the site "family." Keep the pages simple. Sound and moving object files take time to load, and what was charming the first time may become annoying on the second or third visit.

Keep images fairly small to reduce page loading time.

Required Elements

The home page must clearly identify the group and its relationship to Smith College and the AASC. The home page should carry the following text:

Welcome to the official web page of the [organization name]. The [organization name] is a regional alumnae organization independent of, but affiliated with, the Alumnae Association of Smith College.

Please include the following disclaimer:

This page was created by and for the Club/Group X of Smith College. Information on this page is intended for individual communication of a personal nature among Smith alumnae. Use of this information for any other purpose is strictly prohibited. Accuracy of the information on this page cannot be guaranteed.

Smith College and the Alumnae Association of Smith College are not responsible for the content of this page. Responsibility for the page and its content belongs solely to Club/Group of Smith College. This page is maintained by [insert page manager name and address]

Every page must have a link to the homepage. Identify and e-mail link to the website manager on each page. State the date of the last update of the page.

Web Privacy and Policy Issues

Unless it is password-protected, your web page is available to anyone with an Internet connection. Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and photographs produced on your web page are available to the world. Consider carefully the security issues that may be involved. The AASC advises all clubs and affinity groups not to place personal information on the web page.

To provide an e-mail address for users, you can request the creation of a club lifetime email address. This address is strictly a forwarding address. For example, is kcsmithclub@alumnae.smith.edu listed on the site and forwards to a volunteer's personal address which is hidden to the public. Both these addresses can be changed at any time.

Smith College does not release personal information to anyone other than staff or approved volunteers working on specific projects.

Server Space for Your Site

The AASC has arranged for free limited space for clubs and alumnae approved by the association. Please contact the assistant director for clubs to obtain permission to host a site. If a club or group has a website manager, she should be the authorized alumna. The AASC will assist alumnae by:

- hosting an authorized website
- reviewing pages and providing helpful suggestions
- checking pages for required elements
- creating links from the AASC website to club websites

Free server access also can be found at the following sites:

<http://www.geocities.com>
<http://www.tripod.com>
<http://www.angelfire.com>
<http://www.focus-asia.com>
<http://home.onestop.net>

The AASC reserves the right to deny or remove any link to the AASC web page.

Steps To Success

Complete the following checklist to be linked to the AASC web page.

Review the AASC Web Guide and determine the purpose, content, and design of page

Determine server space where the page can reside

Write and design the page, and convert copy to HTML files OR create your page using AASC templates

Check to confirm that the page meets the requirements in the AASC Web Guide

Inform the AASC of the organization's web page and request linkage or hosting by e-mailing alumclub@email.smith.edu

Assure ongoing maintenance of the website

Other Communication Methods

Broadcast Email

An online tool connected to our internal database that allows club officers to send email updates and messages to all alumnae in their area. Please contact us for access (http://alumnae.smith.edu/mission/staff_directory.php).

Telephone Tree

It takes a little time to set up a telephone tree, but it is well worth it. It not only ensures good attendance at programs, it keeps members feeling included and can make the difference between a standard or smashing event!

Divide organization members by class, region, alphabet, or any other pattern that makes sense and assign each group to a telephone volunteer. The volunteers will call their respective members and remind them of the upcoming event. Working the phone tree is an excellent way to introduce members to volunteering. Remember, it's never too early to cultivate future leaders for the organization.

E-newsletter

The first step in creating an e-newsletter is to create a database or email distribution list of alumnae in the area. Several clubs and groups have found that an e-newsletter is a great facilitator and catalyst for networking, and can also help cultivate new volunteers. This is particularly helpful in areas where there is no formal club established and therefore no dues to support mailing a printed newsletter.

Directories

The AASC web page has a secure, online directory that every alumna can use to update her contact information and stay connected with friends, classmates and other alumnae. We encourage everyone to keep their information current here as it is the resource for email and home addresses used by affinity groups, classes and clubs.

Membership

Ways to Attract, Sustain, and Increase Membership in Your Smith Organization

Send newsletters, dues notices, and/or alumnae surveys to all alumnae who are potential members of your organization.

By telephone or handwritten note, welcome all alumnae who are new to the area.

For affinity groups, contact new graduates who share your common characteristic.

Make each new alumna feel welcome at meetings and events.

Remember the big sister assigned to you when you were at Smith? Link new graduates or those new to the area with a "big sister."

Plan a membership telethon a month after dues notices have been sent out.

Find an alumna caller for each decade who can welcome new members and encourage membership.

Offer carpooling to meetings.

Plan special events for dues-paying members only — or offer one price to members and a higher one to nonmembers.

Assign alumnae to specific, well-defined short-term projects.

Periodically ask members what programs or events they would enjoy.

Vary program content, times, and locations to accommodate your constituency.

Use a telephone tree to ensure good attendance at events.

Public Relations

The following information from the Office of College Relations suggests ways in which Smith clubs, affinity groups, and individual alumnae can generate publicity for the college.

Familiarize yourself with local media. Note which of these include listings of meetings and send them information about Smith club events. Be sure to observe deadlines and to send listings in the correct type style. If your local paper uses photographs of events, call to find out how to submit them.

A speaker (especially from the college) whose expertise is in a field of general interest may be available for an interview. Send a note to an editor of the publication or radio/TV show that might be interested in specific information.

If your company and/or any other organization to which you belong writes a press release about a promotion or office you have achieved, be sure to mention that you are a Smith graduate (and submit a copy of the release to the AASC Outreach Department).

If a local media outlet is planning an article or program about women and careers, try to be included.

If you read an article about women's colleges, write a letter to the editor expressing your point of view.

Volunteer (by calling or writing the opinion/editorial page editor) to write an article for the op-ed page.

Notify the Smith College's Office of College Relations about any appropriate media outlets to promote outstanding students from the area. Also, if you know of any Smith alumnae who work in the media, let college relations know.

If you need information about the college, a member of the faculty or staff, etc., please contact the Office of College Relations, Smith College, Garrison Hall, Northampton, MA 01063. The telephone number is (413) 585-2170. Or visit their website at www.smith.edu/collegerelations.

Smith Alumnae Quarterly

To have your organization's news, events, and activities highlighted in the *Quarterly*, send a copy of your newsletter to Alumnae Outreach, Alumnae House, 33 Elm St., Northampton, MA 01063. The editors compile information from the Smith club newsletters for the publication. If you would like to submit news electronically, send it to egibson@smith.edu.

Please note: sending organization news does not guarantee inclusion and photographs submitted may not be returned (so be sure not to send the only copy).