

GVSU Alumni

Laker for a Lifetime

WHAT IS A REGIONAL ALUMNI NETWORK?

A Regional Alumni Network is a group of Grand Valley graduates who live in a concentrated geographical area (at least 200+ alumni within a tri-county radius) and unite through periodic events to socialize, network, and participate in community service in order to stay connected with each other and the university. Regional Networks are recognized by, and accountable to GVSU Alumni Relations and are led by alumni leaders who live in the designated area.

The purpose of a Regional Alumni Network:

- Bring alumni together for networking, professional development, social activities, lifelong learning, and community service.
- Build relationships among GVSU alumni both personally and professionally.
- Provide support to student interns and alumni moving to the region (answering questions and helping them become acclimated with the area).
- Support the mission of the Alumni Relations office.
 - We [Alumni Relations] strive to provide Grand Valley alumni with a sense of community and pride, as well as lifelong learning opportunities. We do this by engaging alumni with student support activities, social and professional development events, communications, ways to give, and academic resources.
- Advance the mission of GVSU.
- Be a GVSU presence in communities – Go Lakers!
- Provide at least two-yearly opportunities for fellowship and networking.
- Mobilize alumni to meet special needs of the university.
- Contribute new ideas to Alumni Relations about existing or possible programs.

HOW TO START A REGIONAL ALUMNI NETWORK

- Reach out to the Alumni Relations office at alumni@gvsu.edu to verify that your region meets the 200 or more alumni within a tri-county radius.
- Find help – Regional Alumni Networks with multiple alumni leaders (at least 2-3) find it easier to complete the planning process and plot for succession.
 - a. The Alumni Relations office can support this outreach with an Interest Survey.
- Complete and submit the [Regional Alumni Network Application](#).
- After the application has been submitted, the Alumni Relations team will review it for consideration. Alumni Relations accepts Regional Alumni Networks based on alumni population size, strength of leadership, and current office budget. This process may take several weeks.
- Once approved, participate in orientation training with the Alumni Relations office.
- If there is a Regional Network in your area:
 - a. Email the current leaders to learn more about the expectations and to express interest.
 - b. Once approved, participate in orientation training with the Alumni Relations office.

REQUIREMENTS OF ALUMNI LEADERS

- Plan and attend the required minimum two annual engagement events.
- Communicate consistently with the Alumni Relations office staff.
- Serve as a regional ambassador for alumni who live in or who are new to the region (answer questions about housing, restaurants, transportation, etc.).
- Manage and properly engage with the Regional Alumni Network alumni population via:
 - a. social media – post at least twice per month, continually engage and respond to inquiries or comments (see resources section for additional support)
 - b. email – work with the Alumni Relations office to send out periodic newsletters (optional)
 - c. other communications outlets – as deemed appropriate
- Personal email will be listed on the website, so alumni can reach out directly with questions.
- Make an annual financial gift to the university and encourage others to do the same (there is no minimum requirement).
- Show enthusiasm for and support of GVSU, as well as a desire to further the interests and visibility of GVSU in the region and nationally.
- Be able to devote the necessary time to the organization.
- Complete the [Alumni Network Annual Survey](#) at the end of each fiscal year.

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY ALUMNI RELATIONS

- The Alumni Relations office will financially provide up to 30% of the per person ticket/event cost for each Regional Alumni Network engagement activity, meeting the requirements listed above.
- Aid in drafting and promoting an Interest Survey to your alumni population.
- Provide promotional support through registration management, email invites, confirmations, and follow-ups for each engagement activity.
- Offer additional promotional support through engagement activity inclusion in e-newsletters, social media, and calendar of events.
- Supply each Regional Alumni Network with specific graphics.
- Create an official social media page with graphics.
 - a. Leaders will be made administrators for the page and will be required to post twice a month.
- Send swag and giveaway items for engagement activities.
- Assist in finding speakers/presenters/alumni volunteers.
- Send quarterly newsletters with resources, reminders, and best practices to alumni leaders.
- Host two annual virtual meetings to provide additional support, reminders, and share best practices.
- Cover the engagement activities registration fees for the alumni leaders.
- Host and manage a Regional Alumni Network webpage on www.gvsu.edu/alumni/networks.
- Send and collect an Alumni Network Annual Survey link.
- Thank and support alumni leaders.

RESOURCES

[Alumni Relations Home Page – gvsu.edu/alumni](http://gvsu.edu/alumni)

[Alumni Networks Webpage – gvsu.edu/alumni/networks](http://gvsu.edu/alumni/networks)

[Social Media Ambassadors](#)

[Social Media Guidelines](#)

[Regional Alumni Network Application](#)

[Alumni Network Annual Survey](#)

[Regional Alumni Network Engagement Activity Form](#)

ALUMNI RELATIONS CONTACT INFORMATION

Alumni Relations
alumni@gvsu.edu
616.331.3590

Courtney Geurink
geurinkc@gvsu.edu
616.313.3593

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES PROTOCOL

Email/Newsletter

Leaders are empowered to send emails or newsletters to their community if they so choose, no more than once a quarter. These messages can be updates, surveys, outreach, etc. They do not include the Engagement Event email invites, confirmations, and follow up. To send an email communication, please complete the [Regional Alumni Network Engagement Activity Form](#) at least eight (8) weeks in advance. (LINK)

Events

Leaders are required to plan at least two engagement events per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

Ideas

- Lifelong Learning/Professional Development
 - Keynote/alumni guest speaker
 - Networking nights
 - Educational outings/workshops/webinars
- Student Support
 - Alumni panels
 - Alumni + student mentoring programs
 - Write encouraging cards to students during exams
 - Host an event where a portion of the ticket price supports a related GVSU scholarship
- Social/Networking
 - Welcome new interns or graduates to the area
 - Happy hour
 - Gatherings around local events (parades, concerts, art festivals, etc.)
 - Local tours (architecture, museums, bike, boat, etc.)
 - Activities (athletics, bowling, arcades, sporting events, escape rooms, etc.)
- Community Service
 - Collaborate with local organizations
 - Park/beach clean-up
 - Conduct a toy/clothing/food/book drive

Planning Process

- Brainstorm and research your event's goals, date/time, location, and capacity.
- Complete the [Regional Alumni Network Engagement Activity Form](#).
 - This form needs to be submitted **at least eight (8) weeks prior** to the event.
- Answer any questions/clarification needs from the Alumni Relations office to finalize details.
- Create the Facebook Event and make GVSU Alumni a co-host.
- Personally, promote the event via social media platforms and personal connections.
- Attend and host the event. This includes but is not limited to: set-up, welcoming, talking points, registration, and taking pictures. Engaging with attendees, learning about their GVSU experience and stories.

- Alumni Relations will manage registration, invites/confirmations/follow up emails, and send swag items.
- Post the event, the Alumni Relations team will reach out for a list of attendees.
 - If you have any pictures, please share those as well, in the original form, if you would like them to be considered for the GV Magazine and inclusion on the GVSU Alumni Relations website.
 - Post photographs to the social media pages.